

The Collaboration between Sida and SAI

**The Department of Social Anthropology (SAI),
Development Studies Unit, Stockholm University**

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**Department for Natural
Resources and the
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SUMMARY

1. Until the 1980s, Sida had a clear demand for contributions from anthropology, seen as a tool-kit for micro-level socio-cultural analysis during the project cycle. While projects remained the dominant modality for dispensing aid, this demand remained. But during the 1980s the status given to anthropology within Sida fell relative to that given to economics. In the 1990s, as the aid paradigm has focused increasingly on poverty issues and as project aid has declined, Sida has begun to articulate a demand for contributions of a more generalist and inter-disciplinary ‘development studies’ kind. The decline of project aid has led to a sharp decline in demand for anthropology, whose possible contribution to ‘development studies’ remains unclear. Meanwhile NATUR (Sida’s Division of Natural Resources and the Environment, which historically has been the main consumer of anthropology) is now articulating demands for development policy specialists on the one hand, and work which combines macro and micro level social analysis on the other.
2. Anthropology, and in particular ‘applied anthropology’, arose as a child of various colonial development interventions. Since the 1970s, a polarisation has arisen in anthropology between ‘applied anthropology’ as it had evolved as an input to project aid, and a variety of other tendencies more critical of anthropology’s historical relation to development. These tendencies sometimes claimed to be engaged in more ‘pure’ or ‘basic’ kinds of research.

At first this polarisation did not emerge in Sweden, principally because leading Swedish anthropologists in the 1970s took the view that good ‘applied’ anthropology could only emerge through theoretical and methodological advances in ‘pure’ or ‘basic’ versions of the discipline. But in the 1980s and 1990s Sweden has also experienced this division, which has come to be expressed not only in disciplinary terms, but also in sub-disciplinary (‘development anthropology’ vs. ‘anthropology of development’), inter-institutional and even intra-institutional ones. This has been associated with an isolation of Swedish anthropologists practising ‘traditional’ applied anthropology at Stockholm University Anthropology Department’s (SAI’s) Development Studies Unit (DSU) from trends in the wider anthropological community.

This evaluation does not find the distinction between basic and applied research valid. Instead, our review and recommendations are based on another distinction, namely that between *applied research* (defined as the application of research-based knowledge) and *the application of discipline-based skills* (in this case defined as the application of anthropology’s conceptual and methodological apparatus). While anthropological ICs may provide the latter without being actively involved in research, the *quality* of the work performed will to a large extent depend on a close relationship of the two.

Although in virtually no case initiatives by development agencies are seen as a relevant context for the subjects being explored, anthropological research with potentially interesting implications for Sida's current interests is occurring at various Swedish anthropology departments (including SAI-DSU). These include:

- natural resource perceptions, use and management;
- culture and the environment;
- cultural change and the perception of poverty/well-being;
- perspectives on human rights;
- conflict situations and conflict solving (including security);
- migration and displacement;
- democratization and civil society;
- gender and identity (including gender conceptions in relation to the body, ageing and the elderly, children, and organizational cultures);
- culture and health.

To which could be added the interpenetration of:

- micro and macro relations;
- local and national relations;
- inter-ethnic relations;
- national and international relations.

And methodological developments in:

- cross-national / transnational approaches;
- multi-locality / comparative approaches;
- collaboration with development country-based researchers.

In some cases this work also draws on methodological insights from other social sciences, relieving anthropologists of the need for undertaking prolonged fieldwork in order to generate results.

3. Sida's principal modality for externally sourcing professional knowledge has been via Institutional Consultancy (IC) agreements with higher education institutions. These were all designed to remedy lack of competence in the broader Swedish professional resource base, as well as in Sida itself. Although the processes of drawing up and managing IC agreements has never been subject to any central control, most have placed obligations on Institutional Consultants (ICs) to both develop the resource base, monitor general professional trends, provide inputs to the project/programme cycle and to carry out special assignments. The agreements' frameworks normally permitted some degree of freedom for ICs to carry out research and other professional development activities, through a flexible budgetary element.

Evaluation of IC agreements undertaken in the last few years points to several common problems. These include their lack of clear 'ownership' within Sida, a tendency to 'over-develop' the external resource base relative to Sida's absorptive capacity, and a transfer to ICs of some duties for which they were over-qualified. Following these

evaluations, it was argued by some that professional competence in Sida was now extensive enough to allow these agreements to be scaled down and more closely focused. Furthermore it was suggested that, in the future, ICs should re-model themselves on a fully commercial basis, to allow assignments from Sida to be put out to tender on a 'level playing field'. Other measures were suggested to improve internal Sida ownership (see below).

While there should indeed be closer control over the formulation and management of IC agreements, it is necessary to underline the comparative advantages of ICs as against other knowledge providers. The most important of these advantages is a quality bonus which arises from a cross-fertilisation of good research and good consultancy work. Hence the presence of research activity is not an optional luxury for ICs, but rather a *sine qua non*. A second conclusion is that the assignments which Sida contracts from ICs should be longer-term in-depth ones, which can feed from and into the research which ICs should carry out.

4. During the 1980s, DSU's IC work for Sida expanded from supplying anthropological inputs to the project aid cycle of the LANT/NATUR Division to resource base development, work on development assistance methodologies, and to work for other divisions (notably HÄLSO (Health Division)). In the early 1990s this was followed by a very marked expansion of work for PLAN/POL (Planning/Policy Division). However, since 1993-94 work from all sources in Sida has declined sharply. The main causes of this decline include reduced levels of project aid and greater expertise in Sida and amongst private consultants. This has led to a 75 per cent fall in employment at DSU - a contraction which threatens the Unit's continuing viability. Coinciding with the decline of Sida assignments to DSU has been an increase in assignments outside the IC agreement. Anthropological inputs of a significant magnitude are now being sourced both from Uppsala and Gothenburg Universities and from private consultants. It is likely that the total volume of this work is as great as the work assigned to DSU.
5. In its work for Sida since the late 1980s SAI-DSU has failed to adopt a strategic perspective aimed at optimising its comparative advantage of an IC in the area of anthropology. Instead, from 1990 onwards, DSU increasingly provided Sida with a combination of:
 - inputs of a generalist development studies nature;
 - 'domesticated' versions of inputs from *development management* environments in other European countries.

At the same time, certain opportunities to optimise SAI-DSU's comparative advantage were not fully grasped. These opportunities were presented by:

- a long-term assignment to advance the debate on popular participation;
- an open-ended opportunity to promote country-level ‘macro-anthropological’ studies;
- some aspects of the Swedish resource base development assignment;

To different degrees, opportunities were presented in each of these areas to incorporate and build on current trends in anthropo-logical theory and methods (or at least encourage others to do so), in order to creatively develop new forms of ‘applied anthropology’. In many cases, these were neglected on the basis of the assertion of the exclusive professional validity of work carried out from traditional fieldwork techniques, and/or an insistence that only those formally trained in such techniques could make a useful *disciplinary-based* contribution to anthropology within a develop-ment assistance context. Declining opportunities for work of the latter kind therefore seems to have led DSU staff away from an-thropology, rather than towards experimentation and innovation in anthropology. DSU’s ‘parent’ institution, SAI, seemingly had no interest in arresting this trend.

The generalist work which came to increasingly dominate DSU’s output was consistently carried out with a high degree of conscientiousness and professionalism. It was generally well received by Sida. But it was work which could have been carried out by other professionals, by private consultants or in-house by Sida’s own staff.

Sida must share a part of the blame for this process, insofar as it entered a relationship with SAI-DSU which served the long-term interests of neither party. DSU was increasingly resorted to as an institutional consultant not on the basis of its access to specific professional competences deriving from the discipline it was supposed to represent, but on the basis of its being flexible, service-minded and ‘on-call’.

6. Seen from the point of view of DSU-staff, it has been a heightened local (Stockholm) form of the divisions in Swedish anthropology which has been responsible for the indifference of SAI just referred to. Within some sections of SAI, DSU’s drift away from anthropology simply confirmed already held judgements about the low academic merit of ‘applied’ anthropology and its practitioners. It appears that the divisions revealed by this are too deep to be healed.
7. With certain notable exceptions, DSU’s work for Sida - both anthropological work and more generalist work - has been generally well received. On the other hand, problems concerning learning from this work are freely admitted. The main barriers here appear to lie with Sida itself. These mainly comprise a lack of internal ownership of some of the assignments performed, overloading of programme officers beyond the level where they can read reports, and lack of professional capacity amongst many programme officers to interpret and apply their conclusions.

Efforts have been undertaken by Sida to improve learning from social science ICs by employing more professionally qualified social scientists who can act as in-house intermediaries (the ‘focal point’ approach), and by decentralising the commissioning of IC work to those who will be directly using it. However, a critical mass of professionally qualified social scientists, which could give the focal point approach real meaning, cannot as yet be said to exist in Sida.

Some of these issues relate to more general problems of organisational learning in Sida, highlighted over the years from a variety of sources. These probably arise from the general lack of fully internalised common priorities and working practices, a situation unlikely to be overcome by the creation in 1997 of an apparently peripherally situated ‘Organisational Learning Unit’.

8. With regard to Sida’s needs for anthropological and sociological knowledge, it is recommended that Sida distinguish between sourcing discipline-based anthropological and interdisciplinary-based development studies knowledge. Of these two, Sida’s needs are greater for the second. But a clear case also exists for the first, both in itself and as an input to a broader development studies provision.

The content of the anthropology in question needs to be carefully specified: namely, an anthropology which uncovers the interpenetration of micro and macro relations, of local and national relations, of national and international relations, and of inter-ethnic relations in the countries of cooperation. Such an anthropology takes its theoretical point of departure in cross-national and transnational approaches, and its methodological one in the project of ‘scaling up’ local findings via multi-locational fieldwork. At the same time, this type of anthropology implies a transcending of the perceived distinctions between ‘pure/basic’ and ‘applied’ anthropological research.

9. On the basis of a comparison of various international alternatives to the Sida model for sourcing social science inputs, it is recommended that these needs continue to be supplied via IC agreements with higher education institutions, since at present the Swedish resource base with regard to both remains weak. Such agreements should be based on a clear understanding of the comparative advantages of ICs, and in this light agreements should be formed which optimise these advantages. This implies agreements built around long-term assignments which interact with research being undertaken by the IC, and excluding work which could as well be performed in-house or by private consultants.
10. Sida should insist that staff of ICs perform research, but should not be responsible for funding it. Sida could open discussion with social science research funding bodies in Sweden (including SAREC) to initiate new five year programmes of research in anthropology and development studies; those university departments winning competitions for funding under such programmes would qualify for

consideration for IC contracts, also on a five year basis. IC agreements should be awarded on a tender basis.

11. Sida should clarify its rules and procedures for making and managing IC agreements, preferably along these lines. The apparently well-functioning system of devolved procurement and management should be retained in order to ensure ownership, but some coordination should be added to it. Agreements should be as explicit as possible.
12. A strengthening of Sida's 'focal point' approach to internalising knowledge obtained through IC agreements is necessary to ensure their optimal use. This entails an increase in the numbers of professionally qualified social scientists in each division with IC agreements with social science providers.
13. Because of the incontrovertible fact that SAI over time administered the collaboration agreement by establishing a special working unit detached from the Department, a mutual exchange system between research and consultancy work ceased to exist.
14. Theoretical and methodological innovations in anthropology which are of potential interest for development practitioners cannot arise or be sustained without work in the discipline. Because DSU is separated from research activity in its parent department, and because its own staff have had only a low degree of recent involvement in research, SAI-DSU is no longer a suitable candidate for an IC agreement with Sida. However, DSU staff do possess a number of competences, which means that any new development studies IC would benefit from their experience.
15. IC agreements with university departments must not turn into the creation of specialised sub-units since the creation of these tends to be associated with situations that divide department staff up in 'pure' researchers and 'applied' consultancy workers. It is only worthwhile for Sida to make future IC agreements with university departments that can provide an integrated approach to the application of discipline-based knowledge.

Resources to compete for both funding for inter-disciplinary research and tendering for IC contracts in the area of development studies appear to exist in embryonic forms both at SLU and at Gothenburg. Regarding anthropology, the strongest concentrations of interesting resources are at Gothenburg and Uppsala.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

CAI	Uppsala University Cultural Anthropology Department
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CDR	Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen
CMI	Christian Michelsen Institute, Bergen
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DESO	(Sida's) Division for Social Development and Human Rights
DFID	British Department for International Development
DSU	Development Studies Unit
EOL	(Sida's) Organisational Learning Unit
HÄLSO	(Sida's) former Health Division (now part of DESO/HÄLSO)
IC	Institutional Consultancy/Consultant
IDS	Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
ISS	Institute of Social Studies, The Hague
KVL	Royal Danish Agricultural University, Copenhagen
LANT	(Sida's) former Agricultural Division (now NATUR)
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
LSE	London School of Economics, London University
MFS	Minor Field Study
NAI	Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala
NDA	Netherlands Development Agency
NORAD	Norwegian International Development Agency
ODI	Overseas Development Institute, London
PADRIGU	Peace Studies and Development Research Institute, Gothenburg University
PLAN	(Sida's) Planning Secretariat (now POL)
POL	(Sida's) Policy Division
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
NATUR	(Sida's) Division of Natural Resources and the Environment
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SAI	Stockholm University Anthropology Department
SAREC	(Sida's) Research Cooperation with Developing Countries Division (an independent agency until 1995)
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SLU	Swedish Agricultural University, Uppsala
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
SU	Stockholm University
SUM	Centre for the study of the Environment and Development, Oslo University
TOR	Terms of Reference
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam

1. Introduction

In 1976, the former Sida's Agriculture Division, later renamed the Natural Resources and Environment Division (NATUR) within the new Sida, initiated a collaboration with the Department of Social Anthropology (SAI), at Stockholm University. The agreement was the first Institutional Consultancy agreement made by Sida, and was renegotiated and renewed in 1995. The overall objectives of the agreement were as follows:

- to make social anthropological expertise available to Sida in a suitable and easily accessible manner in order to enhance the socio-cultural quality of Swedish development cooperation;
- to promote capacity building in the area of applied (development) anthropology at Stockholm University, as well as at other Swedish universities with anthropology departments;
- to support the creation and long-term sustainability of a resource base of development-oriented anthropologists in Sweden and promote the involvement of existing social anthropological expertise in development cooperation work.

The present collaboration agreement comes to an end in December, 1999. For a number of years the Development Studies Unit (DSU) at SAI has requested an evaluation of the collaboration, especially of the extent to which Sida's shifting focus from project-based aid to programme-based co-operation and policy dialogue meets the specific needs and interests corresponding to the main research orientation and teaching activities at the department/unit in Stockholm as well as at other Swedish universities. In August 1998, it was finally decided to carry out an in-depth review of the collaboration and its results to date.

In short, the purpose and scope of the in-depth review is to assess SAI-DSU's sustainability as a partner under new circumstances and to consider other possible collaborative alternatives (which could include SAI-DSU in a new role or involving other actors and a combination of social science resources in Sweden). From the viewpoint of SAI-DSU the review should assess whether the agreement meets the specific needs and interests of the department/unit.

The main aims of the review are:

- to present an overview and analysis of the extent, approaches, content and forms of the collaboration to date, considering especially the relevance of the different aspects of the collaboration in relation to the objectives and goals of Swedish development cooperation;
- to pay special attention to a) the relevance, results and effectiveness of the collaboration in relation to projects and programmes, policy development, and capacity development within different departments of Sida; b) the development of applied anthropology at SAI and elsewhere in Sweden; and c) the establishment of a long term resource base;

- to present recommendations for the future concerning how Sida can best gain access to qualified social-science expertise. The recommendations shall include possible reorientation/adjustment of the present form of collaboration as well as a discussion of alternative solutions.

1.1 The evaluation assignment

The evaluation assignment has been carried out by the Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen. Our review combines a broad historical perspective with a more concrete and detailed one concerning the various parts of the present form of collaboration. The approach and analytical framework are fully developed in our tender but summarized below:

The analysis of the relevance, results and effectiveness of the collaboration between Sida and SAI-DSU takes its point of departure in the interface of Sida and SAI-DSU and pays special attention to the following problem areas:

- Sida's capacity to define and communicate clearly its priorities and needs in dialogue with SAI-DSU and hence to delineate the roles of the different parties. This involves:
 - how Sida makes requests to outside research institutions;
 - how these requests arise (e.g. degree of internal dialogue);
 - what ownership the requests have within the organization.
- The quality and efficiency of the SAI-DSU inputs and contribution in relation to the needs and objectives expressed by Sida. This involves:
- SAI-DSU's capacity to state and communicate clearly priorities and possibilities for collaboration;
- an assessment of the degree to which work is carried out in dialogue with Sida;
- an assessment of the forms and outcomes of the collaboration in relation to different types of development cooperation (e.g. policy and strategy dialogue, capacity-building, project or programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).
- Sida's capacity for absorption and operationalisation with regard to the services offered by SAI-DSU. This involves:
 - Sida's handling of knowledge;
 - Sida's learning processes;
 - the ways in which knowledge and learning are 'stored' within the organization;
 - the implications of the recent Sida-SAREC merger;
 - the collaborative experiences Sida has had with other research institutions in Sweden.

1.2 Methods of data collection and analysis

In the original tender CDR proposed a participatory approach structured around two interview rounds and a mini workshop in conjunction with the discussion of the draft report. Due to a certain delay in the contract process, a request from Sida to be less ambitious regarding Sida staff's participation in workshops, their extremely busy time schedules because of travel plans etc., our approach has been slightly changed. We believe that these changes are of minor importance and without any impact on our final results.

From our reading of activity plans, correspondence, and - in particular - minutes from meetings of the Advisory Committee - we became aware that the anthropological research environment in Sweden may be less harmonious than stated in the collaboration agreement and in the TOR. During our conversations with various Swedish anthropologists and in subsequent unsolicited correspondence, a limited number of people have attempted to turn our attention towards more personal conflicts and grievances that have arisen over the years. We believe that these conflicts are of minor importance to the functioning and sustainability of the overall collaboration agreement and therefore irrelevant to this in-depth review. Instead, we combine a broad historical perspective with a more concrete and detailed analysis of the various outputs of and perspectives in the present form of collaboration.

Information on these issues has been acquired through analysis of documents (policy papers, reports and other forms of publications, DSU's annual and quarterly activity plans, correspondence, minutes from various meetings, course material, annual reports, and web-sites produced by the various anthropology departments, and relevant material from other development-oriented institutions in Sweden), stakeholder interviews, interviews with former participants in the collaboration agreement, interviews with core individuals at various Swedish universities with anthropology departments (Stockholm, Gothenburg, Lund, Uppsala), and interviews with other relevant players in the Swedish development research environment (the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), and the Swedish Agricultural University (SLU)). The great majority of interviews took place during our visits to Sweden, but a few were conducted as telephone interviews. A list of persons interviewed is attached to the report (Annex 1).

Individuals in Sida, DSU staff, Professor Gudrun Dahl, and private consultant Lasse Krantz have provided written comments to the draft report. Together with the draft report, these comments formed the basis for a mini workshop held in Stockholm on January 18, 1999. In addition, some new information was provided during the discussions of the draft report's findings and recommendations. These are included in the final report. Lists of written comments (Annex 2) and of participants in the mini workshop (Annex 3) are attached.

2. Sida's evolving definition of its social science needs

The history of the Swedish aid system may be usefully divided into three phases. These are characterised by a shifting mixture of development paradigms on the one hand, and aid management paradigms on the other. In each phase, different kinds of demand for social science knowledge have been articulated.

2.1 From the 1960s until the end of the 1970s

Although this was never made explicit, the development paradigm implicitly promoted in this period was that of a 'third way' between communism and capitalism, mirroring in important respects the 'Swedish model'. The aid management paradigm of the period correspondingly emphasized very low levels of demands on recipients (low levels of tying, high grant content, availability of finance for some local/recurrent costs, etc). The main aid modality was the project. Project management also embodied low levels of demands on recipients, with projects designed, financed and implemented by Sweden. Projects were mainly in the rural development, energy and reproductive health sectors.

In this period Sida articulated a strong demand for technical, for agriculture-related natural scientific and for socio-medical knowledge. The only mainstream social science for which a demand was expressed was social anthropology, mainly by Sida's Agriculture Division. This was seen as a tool-kit for micro-level socio-cultural analysis, prior to and during rural development project implementation.

2.2 The 1980s

The 1980s were marked by the emergence both of new development and new aid management paradigms. However, projects remained the dominant aid modality. The emergent development paradigm, first explicitly endorsed by Sida in 1983-84, was structural adjustment, i.e. the notion that establishing macro-economic balance and market mechanisms was a precondition for growth in recipient countries. Ensuring the policy transitions in recipient countries which this entailed implied an increase of demands and monitoring by donors.

At the same time, a more technocratic aid management paradigm emerged. Under this, national economic performance was introduced as a basic parameter of 'country programming' (a practice originally introduced in the 1970s as a mechanism for institutionalising recipient control over project choice). At the same time greater emphasis was placed within Sida on evaluating the financial sustainability of projects.

Demand increased in this period for a social anthropological input to the project cycle, as a side effect of increases in the number of projects. But this was now accompanied by the articulation of a need for macro-economic

expertise in order to both follow international trends in development paradigm evolution and to make a substantive contribution to the country planning process. In 1987 collaboration began with three Swedish university departments of economics to provide regular macro-economic reporting on Sida's partner countries. At the same time the number of economists working within Sida expanded, to reach 25-30 by the early 1990s. A significant concentration was found in PLAN/POL (Division for Planning/Policy), which became Sida's dedicated strategic function in this period. In contrast, social anthropological inputs were not followed by efforts to establish an in-house capacity in this discipline.

2.3 The 1990s

This situation shifted to a degree in the early 1990s, mainly as a consequence of the softening of the development paradigm to encompass a concern for the social fall-out from structural adjustment. The first two social anthropologists were appointed to PLAN/POL in 1990-91. This implied an acceptance of a need for 'applied anthropology' which could support policy-making as well as project work. During 1991-94 considerable efforts were made by anthropologists in PLAN/POL to increase awareness within Sida of the advantages of incorporating such a knowledge base in both country and sectoral work, but these met with a lukewarm response. Although social anthropologists now began to be used for a variety of assignments connected with policy development and training, this was often less in their capacity as anthropologists than as social science generalists with inside knowledge of the aid system.

At least relative to Sida's demand for social anthropology, the demand for economics became consolidated, as a result both of the continuing influence of large elements of the structural adjustment paradigm and as a result of further efforts to make country programming more strategic. With the higher status also accorded to issues of democracy and human rights, Sida appointed its first specialist political scientist in 1998.

Since 1996 the development paradigm has undergone a second and more substantial softening, with poverty now defined as a principal policy object in its own right, as opposed to a secondary issue arising from economic reforms. Together with changes in the aid management paradigm, under which has been introduced an insistence on directly integrating aid goals into the detail of programme design and evaluation, this is recognised by Sida as giving rise to new types of social science needs.

2.4 New social science needs

These comprise expertise in interdisciplinary social science-based analytical skills relevant to the operationalisation of specific aid goals (e.g. poverty reduction) in specific national contexts. Sida documentation refers in this context to the relevance of expertise in defining and measuring poverty and in identifying target groups, in evaluating existing data on poverty, in abstracting/devising gender specifics from existing poverty data, in designing

new methods for collecting poverty data, in evaluating changes over time in levels of poverty and inequality and what these have derived from, in analysing national and local power structures and in analysing the strengths and weaknesses of other donors' work on poverty.

Although there is no indication in the Sida documentation examined concerning how such expertise might be strengthened and institutionalised, it is clear that the practice of the British aid agency DFID has become a model. The DFID model involves a huge increase in numbers of in-house development studies generalists (see chapter 9) to work as 'social development advisors'. By 1998 Sida had itself adopted a programme to appoint eight 'socio-cultural' advisors in the field. According to sources in Sida, four had already been appointed at the time of this evaluation. Unlike the expansion in numbers of economists which occurred a decade ago, this expansion is not so far accompanied by a clear commitment to underwrite this trend by investment in institutional consultancy agreements. Most obviously this is because there is no obvious centre for generalist development studies training in Sweden. Indeed, courses designed to upgrade in-house capacity in poverty analysis are currently sourced from the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University, England.

At divisional level, a need for a more traditional kind of 'socio-cultural' input to programmes and the project cycle is also still heard. Even in NATUR however, this is now expressed in terms of a different overall constellation of social science knowledge inputs. Within this constellation, the emphasis lies on the one hand on 'nuts and bolts' knowledge of best practice with regard to (for example) gender and natural resource management, and on the other on empirical and analytical work on specific processes and structures which maintain rural poverty and which exclude the poor from decision-making. This is said to imply a need for more work on institutional structures and on the nature of 'civil society' in rural areas, and on the relation between rural areas and the state.

It should be added that, in the course of interviews at Sida, it became clear that needs for specific social science inputs sometimes had an internal political source as well as one following rationally from changes in working methods or in policy. The progressive softening of the development paradigm in the 1990s has not been a smooth process internally, either in Sida or probably in any other aid agency. It involved internal conflicts, in the course of which particular rhetorics were typically resorted to. The group in Sida which has most systematically promoted the poverty agenda have sometimes had resort to a rhetoric of 'being close to the poor'. This has sometimes allowed the work of development anthropologists (who could be regarded as having proximity to the poor, on the basis of prolonged fieldwork) a heightened symbolic status within the organisation, even when the objective need for the type of knowledge they were generating was generally perceived to be falling.

A few words also need to be said concerning Sida's definitions of the forms in which they expect its social science needs to be delivered. In the course of this

evaluation we discovered that, since the early 1980s, an increasing volume of social science-based inputs had been delivered to it in the form of short-term assignments, going variously under the names of 'Närkonsult', 'löpande rådgivning', and involving (for example) either providing training or making comments on various documents. Later in this evaluation we will argue that the weight placed upon this form of provision of social science-based inputs has been inappropriate and has had negative effects for both Sida and its social science-based knowledge suppliers. Nevertheless, in discussions at Sida after the first draft of this report, it became clear that there was still a strong demand for this form of work from different divisions of the organisation.

3. Relevant developments in anthropology

3.1 A brief history of the discipline

The discipline of anthropology was internationally established in the late 19th century and was influenced, and in some instances even shaped, by colonialism, e.g. by being financed by colonial powers or by other private vested interests.

Two major traditions can be isolated: *Social anthropology*, dominated by British scholars, became concerned with the constraining nature of 'hidden' social structures (drawing on Durkheim's theories of social facts and the autonomy and independence of the social domain). *Cultural anthropology*, by then dominated by North American scholars, became preoccupied with 'symbolic' aspects of human culture and society, and their expression in culturally specific structures of kinship, etcetera. Like the British social determinism, cultural anthropology produced theoretical blind alleys, not least a failure to take into account the historical dimensions of social or cultural systems and the tendency to view a society or a community as isolated or bounded units of study. Somewhat paradoxically, both traditions constructed specific societies/cultures as infinitely diverse and unique, each with its own structure or culture. Later developments have brought social and cultural anthropology together in certain areas; and to the extent that a boundary still exists, it has become more fluid.

From the 1930s onwards, the application of anthropology for practical purposes rose as a separate branch of the discipline. After World War II, one of the main areas in which applied anthropologists became active was that of development assistance. The notion of 'development' - including both economic development and the social and cultural changes following from it - was meanwhile mainly linked to theories of economic and technological history and to those of state formation. Applied anthropologists were in the main uncritical of this interpretation, or at least the criticisms they made had little impact.

In the 1970s, when development agencies began to absorb anthropological research and anthropological ‘experts’ in growing numbers, other groups of anthropologists began to articulate an increasingly critical attitude towards the concept of development. Disregarding the different stands of opposition to both ‘development studies’ and to ‘applied’ anthropology, one common line of criticism was that the orthodox concept of ‘development’ was one which put a ‘simplifying’ label on a highly complex series of variables, and which thus raised serious problems of a theoretical, political, and ethical nature. Contemporary anthropologists have pointed to the ethnocentric character of the orthodox concept of ‘development’ and to the sometimes violent nature of its implementation. Others have suggested that the concept is embedded in neo-colonial constructions of the world and functions as a key ideological tool in global power relations. The recent aggravation of the perceived split between pure/basic and applied development anthropology in Sweden owes much to this debate.

3.2 Anthropology in Sweden

Nevertheless, although the departments of social and cultural anthropology in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Uppsala all originate from earlier departments of ethnography connected to the national ethnographic museums (in Lund anthropology is part of the Department of Sociology), the relationship between basic and applied anthropology is interpreted quite differently by different individuals, and important variations can be found at the various anthropology departments.

In **Stockholm**, a Department of Ethnography came into being at the university in 1960, but it was located at and was closely related to the museum until 1969, when the official designation of the discipline was changed to Social Anthropology. The first professor - Karl Erik Knutsson - was appointed in 1970. Knutsson (who headed the Department 1970-78), had a particular interest in processes of social and economic change in developing countries, and started to collaborate with Sida as early as 1972. This early collaboration was important in several aspects. It led to the acknowledgement that research is instrumental for - and must precede - development cooperation; that resource base development (in Sweden as well as in cooperating countries) was part of Sida’s responsibility; and finally, that anthropologists had something to offer which was *not* based on an understanding of a split between basic and applied anthropology, but on the contrary on a conviction that good applied anthropology can only emerge through the practice and deepening of anthropological theory. From this time, Swedish anthropology established a strong tradition for research on development-relevant topics, such as social stratification, social and economic change in peasant communities, change in land-use and land-management, gender systems, the consequences of local communities being incorporated into wider economical and political systems, and livelihood security under conditions of distress.

Social and economic transformation processes in developing countries continued to be one of the major research foci at the Department in the 1980s.

When Professor Ulf Hannerz was appointed head of the Department in 1981, cultural analysis of complex urbanized societies was added to the hitherto strong focus on rural communities. During the 1980s, a growing interest in the cultural aspects of global economic systems, and in post-colonial cultural forms in developing countries was promoted. In addition, research on immigration and ethnicity was established.

Gudrun Dahl was appointed to a second professorial chair at Stockholm, particularly oriented towards development research, in 1989. Her work has been concerned to promote a recognition that development activities and the concepts used by development agencies in themselves represent social and political processes and relations, and as such should be subject to social science scrutiny. The research programme 'Development as Ideology and Folk Model' (supported by SAREC) was one outcome. The aim of the programme was to study semantic and cultural aspects of the concept of development, to look at cultural variation in interpretations of development, and how ideologies are constructed around such concepts and used to further the interests of particular groups in power and/or resource control struggles.

Several development-oriented anthropologists expected that a professorship with particular emphasis on development research would strengthen the position of applied anthropology at Stockholm University. Instead, it is felt that the appointment led to the split between pure/basic and applied research being reproduced within development anthropology, in the form of a division between *Development Anthropology* (seen as the responsibility of the Department's Development Studies Unit) and *The Anthropology of Development* (seen as the responsibility of professor Gudrun Dahl and the rest of the Department). Various perceptions of this division are elaborated in Section 7.2 below.

Given the fact that the Stockholm Department actually produces potentially SIDA relevant research, especially within the field of macro-anthropology and the interpenetration of local, national and international relations in a developing world context (for which it also has obtained international recognition), to which diaspora and gender studies should be added, the failure to integrate activities at department and unit level is to be regretted.

At the University of **Uppsala**, the Department of Cultural Anthropology is relatively new. It adopted its current name in the late 1979 after some turbulent years of conflict between the first professor - Sture Lagercrantz (1960-75), who headed the Department of Ethnography - and a large group of critical students, who managed to get a new Institute of Social Anthropology established. In 1977, the professorial chair of Ethnography was renamed and re-occupied by professor Anita Jacobsen-Widding. Eventually in 1979, the Department's name was changed to Cultural Anthropology, and the Institute of Social Anthropology was closed.

Research from Uppsala dating from 1980 onwards covered a wide spectrum of socio-cultural issues. A research programme on African Folk Models was started in 1981 (officially terminated 1987), and issues connected with the study of identity and personhood began to develop. In the 1990s, the

Department has opened up to a more experience-oriented research, but still focusing on the core concept of culture, the interplay between culture and experience, between ideology and reality, between structure and agency, and so forth. The Department has specialized in several topics relevant to development, such as conflict research, local conflict solving strategies, civil society and the question of youth and gender in conflict situations, refugee questions, and local 'peace concepts'. Lately, the Department has gained 'research environment' support from SAREC.

Whereas the Department also experienced a certain split between basic and applied research, the tendency in the 1990s has been to work towards a more integrated approach. It is moreover the impression in the Uppsala Department itself that it has been more engaged in development-related questions over the last 5 years than the Department in Stockholm.

The Department of Social Anthropology at **Gothenburg** University was established in 1967, when professor Karl-Gustav Izikowitz left the Ethnographic Museum and dedicated his work to leading the new Department. A second professor, Göran Aijmer, was appointed in 1971. In 1987, the Department was split up in two working units. An Institute of Social Anthropological Research was built up under the leadership of Aijmer, while a new professor, Kaj Århem, was appointed to the Department.

Anthropologists at Gothenburg University have a long tradition of interdisciplinary research cooperation with other disciplines and institutions (e.g. the Institute for Peace and Development Research (PADRIGU)). Currently, research is organized around three strategic fields: 1) gender and identity, 2) health and culture, and 3) the environment, culture and change. These research interests are reflected in three larger research programmes, The Americanist Programme, The Health Anthropology Programme and a long-term programme concerning political discourses and democracy in South-East Asia. The Department has recently (1997) initiated a capacity building and cooperation programme in Vietnam. This program is supported by Sida/NATUR and by the Ford Foundation (contact between Sida and Gothenburg in relation to this programme was established by DSU). Finally, migration and refugee questions have also begun to occupy individual researchers. Given the high level of inter-disciplinary research cooperation it is perhaps no surprise that the split between basic and applied research appears to be as good as non-existent in Gothenburg.

The Department of Social Anthropology at **Lund** is part of the Sociology Department (Sociologiska institutionen), which besides Sociology and Anthropology also comprises Sociology of Law and Media and Communication Science. Compared to the other anthropological departments in Sweden, the Lund Department is quite small and the amount of development oriented research therefore is somewhat limited. From the mid 1970s, research at the Department has been concerned with historical anthropology and the study of global historical processes, the formation and disappearance of particular social and cultural forms, the nature of personhood and social experiences, processes of cultural production, and the formation of ontologies and cosmologies.

The Department has no experience in doing 'applied' development work for Sida, but has on several occasions received SAREC funding for research relevant to development co-operation, e.g. Professor Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman's work on Democratization and War (Congo), and the programme on Social Movements, involving several staff members. Research on the transnationalization of the Third World state and a recent international seminar on the Crisis of the African State, are evidence of potential that could be of interest for Sida in the future. So are the courses for indigenous people on democratic politics and human rights, as well as workshops on indigenous people's problems in Africa and on the Pacific which the Department has recently co-organized.

The Department also seems to have some interesting potentials in terms of methodology development, in particular documentary methods. Researchers seem to have a greater flexibility concerning fieldwork methods, emerging partly from the international trend which Lund is connected to, partly from an acknowledgement of the need to use more intensive ethnographic methods in the field. A byproduct of this flexibility is that 'qualified fieldwork' is seen as being based more on a specific type of institutional relation with development country-based researchers, in which the latter's more overarching and detailed local knowledge base can act as a 'sheet anchor' to visiting researchers. During research in, e.g. the Congo, cooperative relations with local researchers have been important in maintaining continuity.

3.3 Potentials in Swedish anthropology

By and large, the theoretical developments within anthropology in Sweden have followed -and sometimes even contributed to - international trends in anthropology. The research of individual anthropologists have also addressed significant global development problems, although not in any coherent or systematic manner. Newer research on conflict and war situations and conflict/postconflict solutions, population movements in the form of migration and displacement, globalization and transnationalization of the state in developing countries, etcetera, are at the forefront of international development research and are likely to generate knowledge of direct use to quality improvements in Swedish development cooperation. New methods for qualified fieldwork, other than that based on the highly individualized and prolonged initiation ritual subscribed to by trends *less* linked to the international debate, promise well for the future.

The somewhat old fashioned split between basic and applied research, in particular found in the Stockholm SAI-DSU divide, nevertheless needs to be overcome. Since no of the interviewed anthropologists agree to a discipline-based foundation of the 'split', and since all anthropologists participating in the mini workshop find their research potentially 'applicable', signs of a will to solve the problem exist.

Applied anthropology will only stay vital and useful for a development agency like Sida as long as it is grounded in basic research and theory. At all the visited departments it is nevertheless also the experience that basic research needs to be informed by the 'conditions of reality'. The fact that

Sida during the later years has been more open to anthropological knowledge has simultaneously opened up many Swedish anthropologists views of Sida from being that of merely a ‘bureaucratic institution’ to that of an ‘attractive working partner’.

4. Sida’s modalities for sourcing professional knowledge

Throughout the period since its foundation, Sida’s primary modality for sourcing external professional knowledge has been through ‘institutional consultancy’ (IC) agreements. Between them, for example, Sida-LANT/NATUR, Sida-HÄLSO and Sida-POL have been involved in at least seven such agreements since the 1980s. This section will examine the thinking behind setting up these agreements, their content and management, and the results of evaluations of them. It will then review the case for continuing with agreements of this kind, particularly in relation to social science knowledge.

4.1 The thinking behind IC agreements

The basic objective of all the IC agreements encountered during the course of this review was to strengthen the competence of Sida with respect to specific professional qualities. These qualities were envisaged as those elements of particular academic disciplines which could provide specialised and/or cross-sectoral insights and information relevant for development aid. In the absence of a developed private consultancy sector in Sweden (or most other donor countries) up until the late 1980s, the obvious place to seek these qualities was the university sector. At the same time however, there was a concern that these qualities were not widely available even in universities, especially Swedish universities. Therefore Sida’s capacity building would have to be linked to capacity building inside the Swedish university sector. For this reason Sida chose a series of university sector partners regarded as having a concentration of the limited expertise available, and made IC agreements with them having these two objectives.

4.2 The content of the agreements

There were never central guidelines in Sida for the framing of IC agreements, and neither was there a centralised process whereby they could be commissioned. IC agreements were all made at the initiative of particular divisions within Sida - and often at the initiative of particular individuals. Nevertheless, most IC agreements seem to have involved obligations by the academic partner to provide the following services:

- development of aid-relevant elements of the professional knowledge base;

- monitoring of relevant professional debates and providing documentation/information on them;
- development of a wider resource base in the professional community, which Sida could call on (including for recruitment);
- support for programme officers in their everyday duties;
- provision of a professional input to certain phases of the project/programme cycle (e.g. evaluations);
- special assignments.

Once the aid paradigm began to incorporate a stronger policy dimension, support for policy development generally became an additional expectation. In practice, most of the agreements have also been associated with an assumption that ICs could provide some direct training inputs.

As with their commissioning, management of the agreements was highly decentralised. Until recently it seems to have taken a more or less common form of an annual round of discussions between the commissioning division and the IC, based around an activity plan proposed by the IC. Most IC agreements were clearly envisaged as long-term and open-ended, although - as with so many of their other aspects - this was never stated formally.

Since the late 1980s there has been a tendency within most IC agreements for their financing to be split into two elements. Firstly, the first four items listed above tended to be classified as a 'basic assignment' (basuppdrag) for which a flexible common annual budgetary provision was made. The remaining items mentioned were generally classified as additional functional or special duties, for which payments were negotiated separately. The 'basic assignment' system seems to have been generally considered, both by Sida and ICs, to have allowed ICs some degree of freedom to work according to their own priorities.

4.3 Evaluations of IC agreements

It seems that few if any of Sida's IC agreements were subject to formal evaluations prior to the early 1990s. Evaluations were examined of three IC agreements commissioned by Sida-Hälso and one commissioned by Sida-PLAN/POL. Some common points which emerge from the evaluations are as follows:

- Sida's expectations about the agreements were often vague and sometimes not very widely 'owned' inside the organisation. This led to unclear formulation of Sida's needs with regards to many assignments. These factors were connected with the generation of much work that was indigestible for Sida, and to general difficulties for Sida in providing feedback to ICs;
- The resource base development aspect of the agreements was generally highly successful, at least in when 'resources' are defined broadly and in

relation to the academic disciplinary base. It was less successful with regard to developing a narrower resource base of academics specialising in aid-related issues, and in resource base development within Sida itself (although in all cases Sida's internal capacity was strengthened). In some areas more external resources (defined broadly) were created than Sida could digest;

- Successful external development of the broadly-defined resource base was associated with the IC agreements allowing academics to pursue work which was recognisably academic. Such work did not at all preclude good cross-fertilisation between research and consultancy activities;
- Many of the assignments performed for Sida through IC agreements did not make best use of the skills and competences which the agreements provided Sida with.

4.4 New thinking on IC agreements since the mid-1990s

The evaluations described above concluded with a series of recommendations, all of which have been influential in the period which have followed. In many cases, these recommendations refer to a need to take account of changes in the external environment as well as the strengths/weaknesses discovered in Sida's relations with its ICs. The main change mentioned in the former context is the presence of a wider Swedish resource base than when the IC agreements were first made. This resource base is now said to be present both in universities/research institutions not possessing IC status, in the private consultancy sector and in Sida itself. References to this change are usually made in connection with a set of recommendations stating that Sida open up for commercial competition in its sourcing its social science (and other) knowledge needs, that it emphasize more clearly its role as an 'orderer' (beställare) of consultancy services, and that ICs reorganise themselves as commercial consultancies. This was coupled with a call that Sida eliminate from the agreements any suggestion that it was responsible for maintaining IC activities (including research and professional updating) from which it could not derive direct or immediate benefits. This included much of the funding previously made available under the 'basic assignment' heading.

Recommendations of this kind are linked to others calling for a much higher degree of focusing of the agreements. Calls are made not only for slimming down funding for the 'basic assignment', but also for resource base development where this is a separate item. There are also calls for the introduction of methods to monitor the cost effectiveness of agreements and to more closely manage and monitor them.

A second general set of recommendations, which actually tends to receive less attention, concerns changes which Sida could make to improve its ability to properly formulate tasks, to digest inputs and to give feedback on them. The principal recommendations here are measures to increase 'local' ownership (i.e. divisional or departmental ownership in Sida) of the

agreements and to increase Sida's own professional capacity in the subjects covered by the agreements, through the appointment of Sida professionals who can serve as 'focal points' for communication with the ICs. These questions are examined in Section 8.2 below and will not be discussed here.

4.5 Emergent issues

While supporting the second set of recommendations with certain reservations, we strongly disagree with the line of thinking expressed in the first. These imply a model in which ICs take on the role of private consultants who can also, if they are so inclined, apply separately for funding for research to support this consultancy work. It is our view that such a position fails to consider what the comparative advantages of ICs are, and how these may be strengthened. This failure stems from seeing IC agreements as having only a historical usefulness, where there were no other organisations which could perform any kind of knowledge-supplying role.

The demand that ICs take on a commercial consultancy role to which research (of any kind) may be added optionally is made in contradiction to the findings of some of the same evaluations, that there is a cross-fertilisation and synergy between good research and good consultancy. This actually implies that the relation with ongoing research is not an option but an actual comparative advantage of ICs. It also appears to contradict the finding that a significant problem of IC agreements hitherto was that they involved ICs doing large amounts of certain kinds of work (e.g. ongoing advisory work (*löpande rådgivning*)) for which they were over-qualified. ICs taking on a commercial consultancy role is likely to further erode their comparative advantage by decreasing time spent on more clearly discipline-based activities.

The comparative advantage of ICs is that, if they are properly anchored in active and well-functioning research environments, they can provide inputs of a quality which other types of consultants are unable to provide. This quality derives from a strong relation to core theoretical and methodological developments within their respective disciplines, from involvement in basic research in recipient countries (or on development assistance processes), and from their location at the heart of the professional resource base and broader intellectual networks. The extent to which these qualities can be maintained will effect also the quality of whatever short-term assignments are carried out, by allowing them to be better informed by developments in the discipline. Thus, to seek to make ICs more 'efficient' via their commercialisation involves throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

This does not imply that ICs should not be expected to be efficient, or that they should not be obliged to apply competitively with other academic institutions for funding for basic research. But it does entail that ICs should do research as a mainstream part of their activity and that the consultancy assignments which they are asked to carry out are ones which support and benefit from research and other discipline-based activities. This entails implies that Sida and ICs jointly devise new kinds of *IC-specific* assignments

of a longer-term and *research- and/or discipline-embedded* kind. Excellent examples of such assignments are the ‘macro-anthropological’ studies of Tanzania, Zambia and Bolivia commissioned for Sida through DSU. On the other hand, the shorter-term assignments which they are expected to carry out should be restricted in volume to a level which does not interfere with their ability to perform research and other core discipline-related activities (e.g. teaching, supervision, attending meetings and conferences, etc), and which in turn allows them to be properly informed by such activities.

5. Sida’s commissioning of work from DSU and other anthropology departments, 1976-98

The 1976 articles of agreement governing work for Sida by SAI’s development unit stated that SAI would provide four types of inputs. These were long-and short-term consultancies, assistance with access to the Swedish anthropological resource base, provision of courses for Sida’s personnel, and a documentation/information service keeping Sida abreast of developments in the relevant international literature. While the contract did not specify this, these inputs were destined in large part for the organisation’s Agriculture Division (later NATUR).

5.1 Types of work

In the first years the principal type of work supplied appears to have been longer term consultancies, conceived of as background studies for some of the large-scale rural development projects undertaken at this time. However, the overall volume of this work was limited and until the early 1980s comprised only the full-time equivalent (FTE) employment of two persons/year.

In the 1980s DSU, as it became designated, continued to mainly service the needs of LANT/NATUR - while expanding to also service the Health and Infrastructure divisions. Much of the work for LANT/NATUR involved participation in large-scale follow-ups of various long-term projects. The main project areas were integrated rural development, soil conservation, agroforestry/social forestry, rural water supply and artisanal fisheries development. In 1982-83, assistance with access to the Swedish resource base was broadened into the larger assignment of developing this resource base. It was in this context that the Minor Field Study (MFS) was introduced for anthropologists and that an anthropological input (either via recruits or training components) were introduced to other programmes (KTPs (Short-term Placements), and the Senior Trainee, Associate and Junior Professional

Officer's and the Bilateral and Junior Professional Officer's Programmes). Around this time, apparently in an effort to promote greater awareness within Sida of the potential contribution which anthropologists could make to the organisation, DSU also began to take on an increasing number of short-term/ad hoc consultancies, such as commenting on documents of various kinds, drafting TORs, interviewing candidates for assignments of an anthropological nature, and participating in meetings or workshops. As it became institutionalised, this work became known as 'löpande rådgivning' or 'Närkonsult' work.

A more pronounced expansion of DSU activity dates from the mid-1980s, when Sida ceased to unilaterally define DSU's annual activities. Much of the expansion was through an increase in the 'Närkonsult' element of its basic assignment. A little of this budget was not dedicated to short-term consultancies and hence could be used for professional updating (though not for research). At the same time some substantial new dedicated activities (such as that on Popular Participation) were also initiated, at least partly on DSU's initiative. At the same time the documentation and information tasks were expanded and an active in-house publication policy initiated.

Some quantitative information on the spread and volume of DSU work for Sida is available for the period since 1987-88. This is mainly drawn from DSU's own 'verksamhetsplaner' (annual activity plans) and budgets, and hence reflects work proposed by DSU rather than that which Sida agreed to. But for most of the period a high degree of correspondence has existed between the two.

Leaving aside work for SAREC, which became part of Sida only in 1995, DSU's overall volume of work increased steadily from 56.5 person months/year in 1987/8 to 92.5 person months/year in 1993/4 before falling steeply to 59.5 person months/year in 1994/5, 34.8 person months/year in 1995/6, 13.6 person months/year in 1997 and 14.75 person months/year in 1998. Other important trends were:

- that a process of diversification of the DSU 'portfolio', particularly to include work for PLAN/POL, underlay the expansion to 1993/4;
- that much of this expansion primarily involved increases in short-term assignments and/or in training activities. For example, while in 1987/8 DSU's 'Närkonsult' activity was confined to 3.5 person months work for LANT/NATUR (less than 10 per cent of all its activity), in 1993/4 its 'Närkonsult' work for NATUR, together with its similar work for PLAN/POL, including its work for the Women's Unit and the 'Utredningsgrupp' amounted to 39.5 person month (approaching half of all its activity);
- that the decline in work since 1993/4 has been across the board, i.e., in both DSU's more and less traditional work.

To a limited extent, the loss of mainstream Sida work since 1993/4 has been compensated for by work for SAREC (including from 1998 some funded

research) and for other public and private agencies outside of the Sida complex.

5.2 The new 1995 agreement

Coinciding with the reorganisation of Sida in 1995, a new Institutional Consultancy agreement was reached between Sida and DSU. Its objectives were that DSU should provide Sida with improved planning and decision-making competence by monitoring developments within social anthropology and by providing 'special services' of various kinds. The agreement was in the form of a reduced basic assignment for NATUR, covering short consultancies, commentaries, providing information and documentation and developing the resource base, plus an enabling agreement for the framing of special assignments. Although the new contract stated the expectation that DSU would continue to suggest assignments, its most direct effect was perceived by DSU staff as reducing their capacity for keeping abreast of professional developments by tightening the 'Närkonsult' function.

The very sharp decline in DSU's work for Sida since this agreement was reached has been attributed by different sources to the following factors:

- a downgrading of anthropology in Sida's perceptions of its social science needs, especially since the eclipse of the project aid modality;
- a downgrading of Institutional Consultants in Sida's award of contracts, relative to private consultants;
- an upgrading of in-house anthropological expertise both by NATUR and by private consultants;
- the effects of the Sida reorganisation exercise, which disrupted the network of personal contacts in Sida developed by DSU;
- the departure from POL of one particularly influential 'gatekeeper'.

In response to this decline, DSU decided in 1996 not to replace some professional staff members who left to take up other duties. In 1997 economic considerations led to a decision by SAI and Stockholm University to transfer administrative staff to other departments and units within the University. This made it difficult to take on new work from Sida, even where a demand existed for it. At the same time, within the general context of a decline in the former resource base development activity, responsibility for the MFS assignment has passed to other anthropology departments in Sweden and DSU's publication programme has virtually ceased.

5.3 Sida's sourcing of anthropological knowledge outside the agreement with SAI-DSU

Prior to the mid-1990s, Sida's sourcing of anthropological/sociological knowledge outside the agreement with DSU took two predominant forms. One was the employment on a long-term consultancy basis of certain individuals who had earlier worked in DSU but who later became private

consultants. The other was occasional commissions for one-off studies of anthropologists/sociologists who became known to Sida independently, or through its official connections with institutions like Nordiska Afrika Institutet (NAI). The volume of individuals and work involved was rather limited however.

With the assistance of DSU, Sida-NATUR established an Institutional Consultancy agreement with the Anthropology Department in Gothenburg in 1996-97. The agreement is far narrower than that with DSU, covering only capacity building of Vietnamese researchers, primarily in order to service projects and programmes in that country. The agreement is still in its infancy. Gothenburg is also involved in a joint study in Cambodia with the Department of Cultural Anthropology in Uppsala. It appears that this study is a research one.

Because several members of the Uppsala Anthropology Department had become engaged in work for Sida (again mainly NATUR) independently of DSU, it negotiated with Uppsala University to retain a segment of the overhead which now reverts to the Department. It is intended that this segment will enter in the Department's general research budget.

The fact that the MFS anthropology/sociology programme is now controlled by the individual departments means that Sida's resource base development assignment has also been decentralised. The total volume of work performed outside the DSU relation is still small, but by now (in full-time equivalent person years) probably equals or slightly exceeds the volume of work performed within the agreement.

6. An evaluation of the general profile and of selected aspects of DSU's work for Sida

6.1 Introduction

It is impossible to evaluate the entire range of DSU's work for Sida since 1976. In many cases, particularly concerning work on projects prior to the late 1980s, documentation is not readily available. In any case, given the changes in DSU's profile which have occurred since the late 1980s, it is not clear whether a review of such work remains relevant. In addition, the volume of work generated since 1990 is also enormous. We therefore took a decision to mainly comment on the one hand on the general profile of DSU's work for Sida (particularly in the more recent period), and on the other upon written outputs from a cross-section of activities with which DSU has been involved, mostly from the last decade. These are:

- work on 'popular participation' (1987-96), carried out primarily for NATUR;
- 'macro-anthropological' work (1992-97) commissioned by DSU on behalf of PLAN/POL;
- work on gender equality (1992-98) carried out for PLAN/POL by DSU staff;
- components of DSU resource base development activity;
- work on the SAREC research programme on East African coastal areas (not including research carried out by DSU staff as part of this programme)

6.2 Evaluating the general profile

DSU's evolving general profile of activity between 1976 and the present has been described in the previous section. This section assesses the appropriateness of this profile in relation to a set of assumptions which will be made concerning how Sida's Institutional Consultants (ICs) can best manage their comparative advantages. The comparative advantages of ICs have been elaborated above, but can be summarised as

- maintenance of strong relations to theoretical and methodological developments within their respective relevant disciplines;
- involvement with basic empirical research either on recipient countries or on development assistance processes or both;
- location at the heart of the professional resource base (and broader intellectual networks) in donor countries and, at least potentially, in recipient ones.

Management of these comparative advantages implies adopting a certain strategic perspective concerning the nature and volume of (different kinds of) work undertaken for the 'client'. It should not be a requirement that this work always fits neatly into the specific research and other disciplinary-based interests of staff at ICs, but it should be a requirement that the latter engage regularly in discipline-based activity (including research) of a kind which promotes knowledge of basic processes in recipient countries, relates clearly to current theoretical and methodological paradigms in their disciplines, and promotes their own status within the profession generally.

It should also be a requirement that they have time for reflection on this research and for more general professional updating, and that the overall profile of the work they carry out strengthens their academic professionalism. Correspondingly, it implies that they should exercise selectivity respecting the form, volume, and balance of the assignments they accept.

In line with this argument, the general profile of the work of DSU can be divided into three overlapping periods:

- 1976 to the mid-1980s: up to the early 1980s the bulk of DSU's work is medium- and longer-term assignments complementary and contributive to contemporary developments (at least in Sweden) in the anthropology of developing countries, particularly that of arid and semi-arid rural Africa; in the early 1980s DSU also starts to become involved in shorter-term consultancy work for Sida. At least some of this latter type of work has a much less clear relation to anthropology's disciplinary core;
- the mid-80s to early 90s: from the mid-80s onward there is a loss of some medium- and longer-term assignments. This loss is compensated rapidly in overall 'person month' volume terms, through an increasing shorter-term work for NATUR and by diversification of DSU's work to other divisions in Sida. It is to a lesser extent compensated qualitatively through DSU's growing ability to exercise initiative in proposing new work to Sida, and to a lesser extent still by some freedom to engage in professional updating incorporated within an enabling 'Närkonsult' agreement to conduct short-term consultancies for NATUR. But involvement with work in unfamiliar areas, including ones entailing a strong need for familiarisation with specialised practices without a clear relation to the discipline (e.g. training practices) increases time pressures on staff and makes it less likely that they are able to keep abreast of developments in the discipline. DSU's profile loses coherence;
- since the early 1990s: in 1992/3 and 1993/4 work of this last variety comes to dominate the DSU profile, although it subsequently runs down quickly. With the advent of the more restrictive 1995 agreement, opportunities to exercise initiative and to exploit the limited freedoms offered by the Närkonsult part of the basic assignment decline. DSU's links with the Swedish resource base become frayed. DSU diversifies its portfolio of activity again, both in the direction of commercial consultancies and research, but both are carried out only on a limited scale.

From 1991-92 it seems that all DSU staff were aware of, and most were concerned by, this unfolding process. Problems arising from it were discussed within DSU in 1992, but without leading to a major shift in orientation. Rather, it appears that from this time DSU staff became torn between emphasizing their professional identity and adapting themselves passively to Sida's changing demands - including its apparent increasing appetite for short-term assignments - in order to safeguard (or exploit) their IC status. However, the former tendency took a primarily symbolic form, in the shape of a reiterated insistence on the uniqueness of anthropological fieldwork methodologies. At the same time certain other opportunities such as the pursuit of 'macro anthropology', perhaps allowing more scope for professional development, were not pursued as actively as they might have been.

6.3 DSU's work on popular participation (1987-1996¹)

In its dialogue with Sida in the second half of the 1980s, which in large part turned on the immediate and medium-term consequences of Sida's increasing use of private consultants, DSU staff advanced the view that one of the comparative advantages which they enjoyed over private consultants was in their capacity to engage in 'methods development'. The 'methods' in question were ones aimed at increasing popular participation in projects and programmes. The first generation of such methods (Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)) had been proposed and outlined by Robert Chambers and others at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Sussex University, in the late 1970s.

After DSU carried out a short study following 'methods development' in some Sida rural programmes in South Asia, Sida-NATUR and DSU agreed that in 1986-87 that DSU should carry out a three year programme of work following international theory and practice on popular participation, and leading to a syntheses of these for Sida's own future activity. The programme involved the equivalent of one and a half researchers/year during its life.

It appears that the programme's work was actually extended until 1990-91, by which time the emphasis had changed to devising and testing new innovations in popular participation methods which would overcome deficiencies identified in existing ones, and to popularise them in Sida. In 1993-94 the programme was recommenced on a much reduced scale, with the aim of devising a 'course packet' for Sida staff and consultants covering more recent developments in popular participation. Funding for this continued until 1995-96. The activity was indirectly further supported by Sida, under a different budget heading, commissioning DSU to follow World Bank work on popular participation.

The main products of this series of activities were:

- booklets providing an annotated bibliography, guidelines for popular participation in 'development processes and projects' and describing fieldwork methods for popular consultations;
- four extended case study reports on the use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA, the successor to RRA) in particular projects and programmes and a slightly larger number of overview studies on different aspects of PRA;
- a series of courses/workshops for interested parties.

DSU's work on popular participation can be said to have the following characteristics:

- a concentration of work on RRA and PRA methods; very little attention was devoted to other forms/methods of popular participation such as 'conscientisation', or the World Bank's 'stakeholder analysis';

¹ A limited volume of work related to popular participation issues continued after 1996, but has not been examined in this review.

- a tendency to approach RRA/PRA as if they were academic methods of *fieldwork investigation*, dissociated from both their local ‘consciousness raising’ functions and their broader links to the aid system;
- a lack of reference to broader emerging debates on political decentralisation and social exclusion;
- a general lack of discussion of operational problems connected with the use of RRA/PRA.

Although many useful publications providing good expositions of different PRA techniques were produced during the life of this initiative, its overall tone was heavily influenced by the second of the above characteristics. DSU’s work on popular participation throughout the period tended to emphasize most strongly that PRAs were of very short duration and were usually steered by facilitators with only superficial knowledge of local conditions and without training in how to conduct interviews or focal group discussions or to judge the quality of information arising from them. This emphasis was associated with an insistence on the importance of retaining a traditional anthropological input to project work.

DSU’s work on participation has continued in 1997 (for Sida’s Evaluation Unit in an assignment for OECD/DAC’s working group on Aid Evaluation), and in 1998 (for Sida/POL-SAM’s Methods Development Group in a series of seminars on LFA and participation).

6.4 ‘Macro-anthropology’ (1992-97)

The idea that DSU become a provider of ‘macro-anthropology’ (and even perhaps that this become its main role) was advanced by a representative of Sida-PLAN/POL at a meeting of DSU’s advisory committee in 1992. Sida was interested in country-level accounts of social, cultural and political change which could be integrated with country-based macro-economic reporting, and which could contribute to the increasingly emphasized country strategy-writing process. Such studies would be based on strictly time-limited qualitative fieldwork (normally no more than six weeks in all), compensated for by resources for systematic geographical ‘sampling’ of research sites within the countries concerned, and by extensive pre-fieldwork analysis of relevant background material. They should also substantively involve local researchers.

Some DSU staff were sceptical concerning the validity and reliability of information which could be drawn from such studies, particularly since they would apparently have to rely on methodologically ‘suspect’ techniques of the PRA kind. But they collaborated in formulating the TOR, in recruiting the team leader (the British sociologist David Booth), and supporting his research efforts during a pilot ‘macro-anthropological’ study carried out in Tanzania and published by Sida in 1993. DSU also played a key role in devising the concept and methodologies of the studies, of functioning as a dialogue partner during fieldwork and the writing-up process, and of actual participation in one of the studies (Bolivia). Two later studies were also

carried out under the leadership of Booth, both of which were more limited in ambition - a study of the impact of social sector cost recovery policies in Zambia (1995) and one of political decentralisation in Bolivia (1997).

The studies in question are all substantive (120+ pages) and original pieces of academic work, written however in such a way that they are accessible to aid professionals. Each addresses policy changes, although this is more explicit in the Zambia and Bolivia studies, and each provides a qualitative picture of policy impacts. The Zambia study, but not the others, is also directly concerned with drawing policy conclusions.

Each of the studies demonstrates a generally strong grasp of existing sources (though there are few references to case studies of similar processes in other countries in the same region), and builds on these through team-based fieldwork. An evolution can be noted both with respect to the fieldwork methods employed and the numbers/durations of each fieldwork episode. This evolution is basically towards a greater preference for PRA methods and for longer fieldwork periods (up to a month) in a smaller number of locations. After the Tanzania study, the latter are chosen less by 'sampling' and more as a result of pre-existing thorough knowledge concerning differences in local conditions. In the Bolivia study, methods significantly departing from PRA were however employed by local consultant-researchers in a majority of the study sites, as the result of local political circumstances and probably also the preferences of the local researchers. This may imply a lowered degree of comparability of results emerging from the different Bolivian research sites.

Allowing for a built-in degree of superficiality arising from the limited time allocation to fieldwork, the studies are highly impressive. They incorporate a wealth of material and generally appear to interpret it in a balanced and convincing manner. While not contributing to social and political theorising concerning their subject matters, they can in no way be accused of oversimplification. Each also appears to provide both expatriate and local social scientists with opportunities for professional development and academic publication which they might otherwise not have had. As already mentioned, one of the two expatriate researchers involved in the Bolivia study was a member of DSU's staff, providing in the process a rare example of DSU staff's involvement in mainstream disciplinary activities.

With reference to the question of the involvement of both local and expatriate researchers in the studies, it is worth underlining how important the author's excellent contacts with local researchers were to the success of these studies. In each case, some of the most outstanding local researchers on these subjects were recruited. This was critical not only to the quality of the studies themselves but also, as they shifted away from 'sampling' of research locations, to the quality of decision-making exercised concerning the latter's choice. Had these decisions been less good, the studies could not have functioned in the intended way. This in turn provides supporting evidence for the usefulness and viability of the methodological alternatives to long fieldwork described in Section 3 above.

6.5 Work on gender equality

In 1989, Sida's gender office launched a comprehensive, five-year gender training programme. The core of the programme consisted of basic workshops aimed at heightening gender awareness, and at introducing a general operational methodology for integrating gender into Sida's planning procedures and instruments. The Development Planning Unit (DPU), University of London, had the contract until 1992, by which time there was a widespread sense within Sida that the 'Caroline Moser model' used by DPU was too abstract and academic, and that the inputs they provided were not clearly enough integrated into a development cooperation context. In 1991, a decision had been taken to introduce a sector-specific focus into the overall gender programme.

Already in 1989, DSU was commissioned to do a review of the treatment of gender issues in anthropological consultancies for Sida. This study showed that anthropologists were generally 'gender blind'. Partly as a result of this study, DSU received support from PLAN/POL to develop its own competence on gender (via study visits, etc). Especially after 1992/3, DSU collaborated extensively with Sida's gender division and gender advisors. The work involved a variety of tasks, including a 'närkonsultuppdrag' and general advice, coordination of gender specific working groups for four areas of Sida's work (forestry, macro-economics, fisheries and health), work on developing anthropological theory and methods relevant for promoting gender equality in Swedish development cooperation, and participation in Sida's training programmes (on questions of gender equality and gender analysis/planning) designed primarily for anthropology/sociology consultants and Sida personnel. This work seems to have had a major impact on the practices adopted by Sida.

Perhaps the most important aspect of DSU's work on gender has been its training activities. Despite the break with DPU, DSU's early training material for the Sida workshop: 'Introduction to gender awareness and gender planning methodology' seems to be somewhat basic and all borrowed from C. Moser et. al.'s 'Training materials for trainers in Gender Planning'. The emphasis is on getting people to recognize gender differences in access to certain entitlements. The gender analysis offered is based on the conceptual tools of gender planning (gender division of labour, activities and gender roles (productive/reproductive), access to resources, and practical gender needs and strategic gender interests).

Reports from the four sector specific working groups have relied on this 'planning tool' and was published in DSU's 'Gender Discussion Paper Series' (no.1-4). These reports intended to summarize *key theoretical and developmental issues* as reflected in the literature and in current development assistance practice and further develop anthropological theory and method. All reports included guidelines for integrating gender in the respective sectors.

The discussion papers addresses various important gender issues in the four sectors. For example, the discussion paper on Gender, Economics and Structural Adjustment (SA) addresses women and men's different access to

and control over economically productive resources and argues that women and men face different constraints in their responses to changing economic conditions. It is based on a rather general discussion of economically based gender inequalities in different countries, and a distinction is made - but not elaborated - between 'gender aware' and 'gender focused' economics. The account of SA seems rather dated and not particularly clear. Although written in 1995, there is no reference to the (smallish) number of empirical studies looking at the relation between SA and gender at this time. None of the reports can be said to have 'further developed anthropological theory and method'. All the papers tend to see training as a solution to the inadequacy of existing sources along with calls for incorporation of gender into TORs.

Thus, DSU's early work on gender equality to a larger extent reflected a certain stage in the international development debate rather than contemporary debates within anthropology. Among development assistance organizations during this period, the terminology to discuss women's subordination was generally altered from 'Women in Development' (WID) to 'Gender in Development' (GAD). However, this occurred without much change in substantive emphasis. Although it was generally acknowledged that the ideologies surrounding gender roles and identities created obstacles to women's as well as to men's (equal) economic, social, and political participation, issues of men and masculinity were marginalized in the debate. Contemporary anthropological research, which took an increasing interest in studying men's identity and roles - and which in the process distinguished itself from previous male-centred work - seems not to have been absorbed to any significant extent by DSU at this time. By disregarding the complexities of male experience, by sometimes characterizing men as the 'problem', and by continuing to focus on women-in-general- as 'the oppressed' and the 'disadvantaged', mainstream development approaches' overwhelming preoccupation with women was not really challenged.

In the mid-1990s, DSU seems to have left the 'Caroline Moser model'. A new report - 'Addressing the Needs and Rights of Girls and Boys in Child-Focused Projects: A Reference Guide for Gender Planning and Monitoring' (draft report, September 1998) - more directly acknowledges that gender is clearly as much an issue for boys/men as it is for girls/women, and as such distances itself from a women-only approach. Another 1998 paper - 'Integrering av et jämställdhetsperspektiv i DESO/HÄLSOs verksamhet' ('Integration of an equal opportunities perspective in the activities of DESO/HÄLSO') - states that Sida's basic working method for integrating gender has been aimed at 'mainstreaming'. It then states that in the Health sector, many of the unit officers have gone through Sida's or other courses but felt that these were unsatisfactory to the sector's specific problems. An awareness of the limitations of a mechanical practical/strategic model and a need to take account of the complex and variable nature of gender in various sectors are thus evolving as a new point of departure for DSU's work. Apparently, these insights have been brought into DSU's training activities. It should be stated, however, that no matter the conceptual point of departure, the general reception of DSU's training within Sida has been highly positive.

In 1998 Sida turned more to Canadian consultants and to the Canadian CIDA for its model of gender training. The reason for this turn is said to be, first and foremost, that it is considered good for an organisation to change consultants from time to time in order not to get 'stale'. Although DSU has taken on work on gender equality from sources outside Sida, this has not compensated in volume terms for its decline of work for the former.

6.6 Resource base development

DSU's resource base development work has, since the early 1980s, involved certain activity undertaken mainly by DSU alone. This comprised DSU's involvement in recruitment to or training for various Sida-sponsored professional development programmes, the provision of a practical 'backstopping'(individually-tailored advice) service to young anthropologists in such programmes and, according to some interpretations, DSU's documentation function.

It has also involved a large volume of activity carried out in collaboration with other anthropology departments in Sweden. DSU's collaboration with these was institutionalised via three main mechanisms - the 'Rådgivande biståndskommitté' (Advisory Committee), regular inter-institutional visits, and the Minor Field Study (MFS) Programme. In addition, DSU maintained regular interaction with the other departments on an informal basis.

This section will concentrate on the general relation between DSU and the departments, and on the MFS programme. Before doing so however, it is useful to underline how widely and warmly praised was the 'backstopping' function referred to, by all those interviewed who received or observed it.

6.6.1 The general relation of DSU and the anthropology departments

Seen from DSU, the collaboration between DSU and the other anthropology departments in Sweden has been successful. Some criticism of a supposed bias on the part of DSU towards recruiting Stockholm anthropologists for work for Sida was raised over the years. An assessment by DSU showed that this was not actually the case and it is now generally acknowledged by the other departments that the criticism was probably mostly a symptom of the non-Stockholm departments' feeling of 'being on the periphery of things'. At SAI, DSU's coordinating function and endeavour to avoid appearing as a monopolizing Stockholm institution is seen as having contributed to the relative isolation from the Department.

Minutes of the twice-yearly meetings of the Advisory Committee, on which the other departments were represented, confirm that relations were indeed smooth until the beginning of the 1990s, when Sida's perceived social science needs began to change (see Section 2 above). This change was perceived rapidly by the core staff of DSU, but neither by some of its non-core staff nor by the other departments. Conflict subsequently arose over how the core staff of DSU were seen as responding to the new challenges. Representatives of the departments took the view that the new type of assignments which DSU was receiving did not meet the needs and

interests corresponding to their research orientations or teaching interests. The departments also appear to have lost interest in their annual visits from DSU staff, undertaken by DSU in order to maintain personal and professional contacts with department staff generally as well as to publicise the work of DSU and opportunities for young anthropologists within development assistance. There seems also to have been frustration from one of the departments over the role of the Advisory Committee itself, 'DSU staff would read aloud their activity plans while the rest of us sat there sleeping'.

The Advisory Committee's meetings were reduced to an annual basis in the mid-1990s and seem not to have occurred at all since early 1997 (though not because of dissatisfaction on the part of the departments). However, by this time the relation between DSU and the non-Stockholm departments had come to resemble, albeit in a less acute way, DSU's relation to SAI. Almost certainly, the deteriorating character of the latter itself contributed to this process. Since the mid-1990s it is anyway clear that DSU has ceased to play a central coordinating function with respect to the resource base. Although DSU remains centrally involved in most of Sida's in-house recruitment of anthropologists and sociologists, at least one department (Uppsala) has been following a policy of establishing relations with Sida completely independently of DSU. Another (Gothenburg) also has such independent relations, but in this case they resulted from DSU intermediation.

Nevertheless, and particularly at Gothenburg, DSU's broad historical contribution to resource base development is seen quite positively, both through the MFS and Short-Term Placement programmes. Staff at Gothenburg also point to the benefits they derived from participating in DSU courses on economics for anthropologists, logical framework analysis (the working method used on a daily basis in Sida's internal planning), gender equality and applied development anthropology.

6.6.2 The MFS programme (1982/3 to present)

Initially, the purpose of the overall MFS programme (which included many other disciplines besides anthropology) was conceived as providing Swedish undergraduate students with direct, initial experience in the application of their discipline-based skills to practical problems and issues related to development assistance programmes. A second aim was to stimulate a future interest in professional advisory work. The programme involved a two-three month fieldwork posting in a recipient country. DSU conducted an evaluation of the anthropology MFS programme's contribution to resource base development in 1990. Participants in 10 of the 16 completed MFS studies prior to 1989 (11 persons in all) replied to a questionnaire sent out to determine their current employment status. 6 of the 11 were in development-related occupations and 4 were engaged in further studies.

Until 1995, DSU was responsible for the MFS anthropology programme in its entirety. This entailed compiling a list of possible projects, selecting students, drawing up TORs, and coordinating with Swedish department-based and overseas-based (usually local project staff) supervisors. DSU-coordinated MFS studies were somewhat anomalous in relation to MFS

studies generally, insofar as DSU staff normally required that candidates for them should be undergoing graduate training. 22 MFS studies have been published in the DSU Working Papers series since the programme's inception.

Balancing the aim of improving participants' anthropological competence with that of providing a usable input to specific development projects has proved difficult. Arguably, the former implies a deepening of theoretical and methodological reflection as well as performing concrete fieldwork assignments. For the most part however, TORs supplied by DSU exclusively stressed the latter. This contributed to tensions between DSU and at least one of the departments. The reasons for this emphasis became more controversial from the late 1980s, as Swedish involvement in project aid declined and as an increasing proportion of the assignments have not been directly related to aid projects or programmes. This stress also makes a quality assessment of the programme difficult - or at least rather predictable in its outcome.

The seven studies examined by the reviewers cover topics ranging from female headed households in rural Bangladesh (1984) to village afforestation in Tanzania (1987), artisanal fisheries and fish marketing in Nicaragua (1989), seaweed farming in Zanzibar (1992), gender relations, sexuality and reproductive health in rural Zambia (1995), household-level effects of the devaluation of the CFA Franc in Burkina Faso (1995), and finally attitudes and cultural values regarding gender issues within Sida's Health, Sanitation and Water (HESAWA) programme in Tanzania (1997). The Bangladesh and the two Tanzania studies were directly related to a Sida-funded aid projects. The Zanzibar and Zambia studies were both related to SAREC research collaboration agreements. The Nicaragua and Burkina Faso studies might also have been related to research collaboration agreements but this is not stated. These reports have been selected on the basis of coverage of the length of the programme's life and of the relation of the topics to central aspects of DSU's work for Sida. The latter principle may seem unfair in that DSU has not been the main supervisor of all of the studies. However, it does provide some information on the spill-over effects of the work done at DSU.

As indicated, all the DSU-designed TORs for the studies reviewed (except for the Bangladesh study, to which no TOR is attached) refer exclusively to a list of empirical topics which should be investigated by the MFS students. There is no mention of theoretical or methodological debates or issues in the TORs. Nor are there any requirements to set the study in a wider empirical or social scientific frame.

The studies are all qualitative and survey-based. In most cases the surveys seem to have been conducted in a thorough and competent way, and results from them are presented clearly and systematically. However, in all cases except two (the Zanzibar seaweed study and the Zambia reproductive health project) little or no attention is paid to the broader empirical context of the study object, especially in its economic aspect.

Probably as a result of the TORs, none of the authors except the author of the Zambia reproductive health report make reference to wider discussions around the themes treated in their studies. For example, despite being well-executed and generating some interesting findings, the Burkina Faso study fails to refer to any of the huge international literature on the social consequences of structural adjustment in Africa, or even to the substantial literature on household-level responses to it. Knowledge of this literature would have suggested additional useful lines of enquiry, as well as allowing the author to set his findings in a comparative context. Although conceived at least in part as introductions to an apprenticeship in anthropology, discussion of methodological issues is equally rudimentary.

This reading of the studies suggests that, while they contributed to developing the competence of the authors as anthropologists/sociologists, they did so in a narrow way, with opportunities for developing contextualising and analytical skills largely overlooked. One study, namely the Zambia reproductive health study, however stands out. The study contributes new insights to the body of gender theory by adding male personhood and male sexuality to an otherwise female-focused literature. The originality of the research and the observations and findings presented was/is certainly of great potential value to Sida's work in a number of fields, as well as to the discipline of anthropology. The fact that the author was directly connected to the work done at DSU before and during the MFS assignment may well underlie the outstanding quality of this report.

From 1996, MFS programmes/grants have been administrated directly by the individual anthropology and sociology departments in Sweden. In 1997, eight anthropology students completed MFS studies (1 from respectively Stockholm and Gothenburg, 3 from respectively Uppsala and Lund).

6.7 Involvement in the SAREC-sponsored Integrated Coastal Zone Management Programme

One of DSU's strategies in relation to Sida's changing needs in the beginning of the 1990s was to redefine its core competences to include research collaboration for capacity building in departments of anthropology/sociology in Sida partner countries. A frequent theme in DSU activity plans was that, while there were departments of sociology in universities in recipient countries, these lacked both experience of methods for longer-term qualitative fieldwork and also incentives to engage in such fieldwork.

An opportunity to work in this area was presented in 1993, when SAREC invited DSU to add a socio-economic project on the 'Social and Cultural Aspects of Integrated Coastal Zone Management' to a broader natural science SAREC-funded programme, the Eastern African Coastal and Marine Science Programme. A representative of SAREC had apparently become interested in the socio-economic dimension of this subject after reading the Zanzibar seaweed MFS study (see above).

DSU has been responsible for the coordination of the project, whose main objective was framed as the promotion of qualified and sustainable research capacity with regard to coastal issues among anthropologists/sociologists in the region, through partnership and institutional collaboration. The long-term capacity-building objective of the project is to provide more comprehensive knowledge of coastal dwellers' complex livelihood systems and social organization. In the last two years, DSU staff have also themselves engaged in research on the programme. This component of their activity has not been evaluated.

DSU's initial approach to these issues is said to have been based on an inventory of the anthropological/sociological resource base in selected African countries (conducted as an assignment from POL). The 1991 Tanzania inventory is said to have concluded that - besides the fact that the volume of local anthropologists/sociologists was low - few among them had an interests in or experience with village studies, that there was a general lack of adequate methodological training, that poverty directed research had low priority (due to local career and status hierarchies), and finally that the local research tradition favoured quantification and description rather than qualitative analysis and critical scrutiny. Accordingly, the point of departure for the formation and development of an anthropological component of the Sida/SAREC regional programme in Eastern Africa became the 'discrepancy between the requirements for anthropological and sociological professional capacity, and the limited experience of social science research in the coastal zone within the region'.

A round of consultative visits was undertaken to three participating countries (Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania) in November, 1993. A three week training course, focusing on Eastern African coastal society, culture, environment and interactive fieldwork methods, was planned, mainly for MA students from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). The course, which was meant to be a joint venture between DSU and UDSM, was nevertheless postponed due to various problems (according to DSU including confusion about the course designation, rate levels for allowances, etc.). Apparently, no organised activities took place before October 1995, when a regional workshop involving 25 participants were held in Zanzibar. Later results have included doctoral field research grants, MA scholarships and field research funding, as well as disciplinary seminars on issues of theory and methodology.

While it was suggested in our tender that partners in developing countries ideally should form part of the current evaluation - in this particular case, e.g. African researchers involved in the programme - Sida made no funds available for a visit which would have allowed this. Only one interview was conducted with an African researcher involved in the programme, who happened to visit Copenhagen during the study. However, this researcher was Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UDSM during the programme's initial phase.

His highly critical account of the operation of the programme up to 1997 and that of DSU staff diverge in important respects, but it appears undisputed that DSU's initial approach to the issue of local research capacity building was regarded as insensitive and/or inappropriate by important potential cooperating partners, insofar as its point of departure was perceived to be the needs of the SAREC research programme rather than the needs of the Department of Sociology at UDSM.

Some of this criticism seem to have been absorbed by DSU in the 1997 proposal for the second phase of the project. In the proposal it is acknowledged that future activities need to be based on a clearer mutual understanding, that a common agenda must accommodate both the building of junior researcher's competence and senior researchers' opportunities (through supplementary research funds and scholarships for junior researchers and broader support to the institutional environment for all researchers).

6.8 Summary and conclusions

In its work for Sida since the early 1980s DSU has failed to adopt an appropriate strategic perspective aimed at optimising its comparative advantage as an Institutional Consultant in the area of anthropology. Instead, from this time and apparently in the belief that this would increase within Sida the credibility of anthropologists, an increasing volume of its work became devoted to shorter-term assignments. In many cases, these required DSU staff to engage heavily in activities removed from the disciplinary core. Moreover, the volume of time taken up by shorter-term assignments seems to have effects on DSU staff's ability to keep abreast of developments in the discipline. This was reflected, *inter alia*, in the absence for a long period of up-to-date anthropological insights in DSU's training inputs.

At the same time, certain opportunities to optimise DSU's comparative advantage were not fully grasped. Such opportunities were presented by:

- a long-term assignment to advance the debate on popular participation;
- opportunities to more actively promote country-level 'macro-anthropological' studies;
- work on gender equality;
- some aspects of the Swedish resource base development assignment;

To different degrees, opportunities were presented in each of these areas to incorporate and build on current trends in anthropological theory and methods (or at least encourage others to do so), in order to creatively develop new forms of 'applied anthropology'. In many cases, these were neglected on the basis of the assertion of the exclusive professional validity of work carried out on the basis of traditional fieldwork techniques, and/or an insistence that only those formally trained in such techniques could make a useful disciplinary-based contribution to anthropology within a development assistance context.

Declining opportunities for work of the latter kind therefore seems to have led DSU staff away from anthropology, rather than towards experimentation and innovation in the discipline. DSU's mother-institution - SAI - seemingly had no interest in arresting this trend.

The various types of work, such as a specific version of gender equality training, which came to increasingly dominate DSU's output was consistently carried out with a high degree of conscientiousness and professionalism. As will be seen in Section 8, it was generally well-received by Sida. But, because there was little direct contemporary input from the discipline of anthropology in this work, it could just as well have been carried out by other professionals, by private consultants or in-house by Sida's own personnel.

Sida must share a large part of the blame for this process, insofar as it entered a relationship with DSU which served the long-term interests of neither party. DSU was increasingly resorted to as an institutional consultant not on the basis of its access to specific professional competences deriving from the discipline it was supposed to represent, but on the basis of its being flexible, service-minded and 'on-call'. Sida's institutional capability and role was a contributing factor, as was focal-point vacancies and overburdening within the organization, particularly since 1993-94.

7. The relation between SAI-SU and DSU

7.1 Contextualizing the relation

A 'biståndsavdelning' (Development Assistance Section) was established at SAI in 1972, and was in the main an outcome of Professor Karl Eric Knutsson's own interest in development studies and his personal contacts within Sida. This 'section' was headed by Erik Jacoby, a leading agricultural economist, and its basic function was to build up inter-disciplinary development competence among different academic groups. Anthropology courses, directed towards agricultural, medical and health specialists, were successfully arranged and resource base development was seen as the main component of the collaboration.

The formal collaboration agreement between Sida and SAI-SU was established in 1976. At this time, Sida articulated a regular demand for social anthropology, especially for the 'community knowledge' anthropologists could provide. This demand coincided with anthropologists' interest in gaining field experience (and in generating funds for fieldwork). The collaboration agreement was based on the demand that Sida was made responsible for social science competence development in Sweden, a responsibility Sida, according to Karl Erik Knutsson, took very seriously. (This was prior to the formation of SAREC).

The idea was that work carried out by the 'avdelning' should be closely affiliated with SAI's research and teaching activities. Furthermore, the 'avdelning' should have close links with the Departments of Anthropology at the Universities of Gothenburg, Uppsala and Lund. These links later became institutionalised in the form of an Advisory Committee composed of representatives from the four departments (in the case of Lund, the Sociology Department), SAREC, Sida, plus the two ethnographic museums in Stockholm and Gothenburg.

Up to approximately 1978, the 'avdelning' was quite small, consisting of four persons (Karl Eric Knutsson, Aud Talle, Wilhelm Östberg, Anders Hjort af Ornäs) who spent no more than 40-50 per cent of their time at DSU, the remainder at the Department. This time division - together with the professor's direct involvement - apparently facilitated the 'avdelnings' ability to collaborate with *both* Sida *and* the Department. In the 1980s, however, Sida's increasing demand implied a staff expansion (at one point to 7 anthropologists, 1 sociologist, and 2 secretarial staff) and led to the formalisation of the avdelning's status as DSU. This coincided with a general expansion of staff at SAI. Owing to overcrowding of the Department's space, the practical solution became to physically move DSU to another building.

At first, the expansion of DSU activities resulted in the evolution of a somewhat anomalous position with regard to appointments and employment status. Other than DSU's chairperson (by this time Lasse Krantz), all 'core staff' were until 1987 appointed to administrative rather than teaching or research positions, with job descriptions encompassing only work for Sida. In 1987, as part of a general rationalisation of university administrative posts, these positions were converted to university lectureships, but still dedicated to work for Sida, and allocated to DSU. The posts were advertised, but in such a way that only their existing incumbents could qualify for them.

7.2 The emergence of a problematic relationship

The great volume of applied work carried out by DSU, and the nature of the job descriptions of those who carried it out, reduced the feasibility of academic research, which in turn rendered difficult the unit's feed-back of experience to the Department. After 1991-92 this problem was intensified by the fact that a great deal of the work carried out by DSU for Sida was no longer 'applied research' (research-based knowledge), even though some of the work can be said to have involved the 'application of discipline-based skills' (conceptual and methodological apparatus). With a few exceptions, a 1994 self-evaluation report concluded that DSU activities could no longer be said to be integrated in the Department's activities. In addition, the separate location of DSU (outside the buildings of SAI) was seen by staff at DSU as well as at SAI as having reinforced a split between unit and department.

Several persons interviewed articulate this as a split between *Development Anthropology* and the *Anthropology of Development*, where the former is understood as 'applied' (and by some as entirely non-academic) anthropology in

development aid cooperation; the latter as an anthropological critique of conventional development perceptions and practice. Other designations of the split are A and B anthropology or High and Low anthropology. Seen from DSU, it seems that the work the unit does has lower status than anthropological research at the Department as such. Seen from SAI, it seems that DSU has lost track of newer theoretical developments in anthropology, that DSU members have been reluctant to teach, supervise and research, and that DSU has missed the opportunity to turn consultancy reports and applied research into academic writing.

The practical outcome of the split is that contact between unit and department has been very limited since the early 1990s. Within Sida, as well as among the remaining staff at DSU, it is the general impression that DSU is *not* supported by the Department. At SAI there seems to be reservations about engaging too much in an agreement that do not provide funding for research or about having the research agendas set by Sida-generated questions. A few staff members at SAI expresses that the anthropology of development (or research on development aid) needs to be detached from organizations like Sida. At the same time leading staff members at SAI put forward the argument that a good relation between Sida and the Department necessarily must include DSU staff's need for academic reproduction. Again, Sida's lack of funding of research and academic reproduction is seen as the major source of the problem.

During the 1990s, staff at DSU have largely operated on their own. The renegotiation of the collaboration agreement in 1995 nevertheless gave rise to a renewed contact between DSU and SAI, contact that for years had only taken place in the Advisory Committee. A working group was formed and discussions on the possibility of creating a larger applied unit (including other issues than development anthropology such as e.g. medical anthropology or education) began to take place. However, SAI-DSU discussions rapidly became discussions about administration and financial responsibilities. There is however also a group at SAI (including a few persons who have left DSU) who find that it would be a better idea to dispatch 'the whole thing'. Disagreement as to which assignments DSU should accept, leadership and management methods, as well as which kind of applied anthropology DSU should offer, seem to provide the basis for this conclusion.

Efforts to define more precisely the relationship between DSU and SAI have come to a head in recent months mainly because of the rapidly falling volume of work performed by DSU for Sida and also, independently, because SAI has felt itself under increasing economic pressure from SU's administration. The pressure from SU's economic administration is largely due to the characterization of the kind of external financial funds brought in by DSU and how these should be recorded and kept track of in the SU system. Since 1996-97, following cutbacks of staff at DSU, there has not been sufficient capacity in the Unit to satisfactorily handle specialised book-keeping/accounts functions. DSU has been unable to generate enough income to finance a full-time post, while SAI does not see the co-financing of a shared administrative post as in line with its current priorities. On the other

hand, until such a post is created, and until a more secure situation for funding additional staff in DSU is reached, DSU is apparently unable to expand its activity to a level perceived by all concerned as viable in the long term. From SAI's side, few signs exist of a will to resolve this problem.

8. Sida as a consumer and learner from DSU's work

This section will begin by examining Sida's reception of the work of DSU, based on interviews carried out in different departments of Sida. It will then discuss if and how Sida has managed to learn from social science-based institutional consultants. Finally it will make some observations on Sida's general ability to engage in organisational learning.

8.1 Sida's reception of the work of DSU

No systematic effort was made to survey Sida personnel concerning the reception of work from DSU, but the interviews undertaken at Sida were probably in sufficient number and of sufficient length to arrive at some reasonably representative conclusions. These will be presented in relation to DSU's contribution to LANT/NATUR's project work, as well as to some of the aspects of DSU activity already evaluated above.

DSU's contribution to LANT/NATUR's project work from the late 1970s to the present was positively received by all who had experience of it. It was widely stated that it had both a direct benefit to particular projects and a long-term cumulative effect. 'The social impact perspective has now been internalised' was a common observation. The quality of the advice received was felt to be high, as was its operationalisability. However, for a number of those interviewed, operationalisability tended to be equated with DSU 'having learned our (i.e., Sida's) way of thinking'.

In contrast, the long DSU project on popular participation was generally negatively received both in LANT/NATUR and in PLAN/POL, though for different reasons. In LANT/NATUR it was variously described as 'a flop with no impact at all', 'impractical', 'very theoretical', 'not absorbable', and 'not well presented'. In many cases, these attributes were thought to result both from the way in which material on the issue was presented, and the fact that the project was said to have been conducted in the absence of a clear in-house demand. Correspondingly NATUR was generally agreed to remain weak on the topic. In POL the criticism was instead that DSU had failed to bring the topic into the macro-domain. It was stated more than once that 'they don't know how to scale up'.

DSU's role in the 'macro-anthropological' studies undertaken was largely that of connecting Sida to the wider resource base, and the efficiency with

which this occurred was warmly received in PLAN/POL, as were the studies themselves. The most recent of the latter (the Bolivia study) was also warmly received in the Latin America Department. Reservations by Sida staff about the impact of these studies focussed only on the fact that there were not more of them, which in turn tended to be seen as the result of a combination of a lack of sufficient internal ownership and a reluctance from DSU's side to see themselves as 'macro-anthropologists'.

DSU's work on gender equality, both in form of training and of policy work, was generally well-received, except by a small number of senior male staff who felt that Sida was engaging in 'overkill' on gender issues. Outside of this group, the work was held to be highly competent, although it was occasionally described as not particularly innovative. Problems, where they were identified, were held to stem mainly from divisions' and departments' own incapacity to properly assess their needs in advance of training etc being commissioned. Again, the success of the work was often associated by staff with the fact that the DSU personnel involved 'know Sida well'.

8.2 Sida's learning from social science-based institutional consultants

Discussion with both Sida personnel and DSU staff indicated that the extent to which Sida was able to internalise knowledge provided to them by social science-based institutional consultants was fairly limited. In the course of discussions, several different types of problem were identified, which can be broadly categorised under the headings of:

- problems of reception and use;
- problems of accumulation and retention;
- problems of quality;
- the 'focal point' solution;
- encouraging local 'ownership' of institutional consultancy arrangements.

These will be discussed in turn, together with the principal solutions which Sida has adopted in relation to them, namely the 'focal point method' and the encouraging of greater 'ownership' of such inputs at the most important functional levels of the organisation.

Problems of reception and use: When Sida personnel are questioned about the way in which social science-based knowledge is received in the organisation, and the extent to/ways in which it is used, two kinds of reaction are common. On the one hand, there are frequent complaints about the indigestibility of much of the inputs in question. On the other hand, there is a general awareness of organisational barriers to the absorption of such knowledge within Sida itself.

Issues of 'indigestibility' tend to turn on whether work is seen as 'theoretical' or 'practical'. 'Theoretical' does not necessarily refer to the presence of actual theoretical formulations or even to the absence of concrete recommen-

dations, but rather to inputs being formulated in an (development assistance-related) 'context-free' way. 'Indigestibility' was often thought of as a consequence of using people 'unfamiliar with Sida's needs', but only rarely in terms of an inability on Sida's side to define what it really wanted.

But interviewees tended to be remarkably frank in discussing organisational barriers within Sida itself to absorbing such input. Those most commonly referred to were lack of 'ownership' of the knowledge concerned, and overloading of programme officers. Overloading sprang mainly from what was perceived as steadily increasing demands on programme officers to 'integrate a whole range of new policies' into their work, as well as to absorb knowledge inputs from a variety of social science disciplines. Secondly, this was held to be intensified by the increasingly detailed nature of administrative procedures which programme officers were expected to follow, and by the fact that programme officers were said to be increasingly expected to take on some of the work of administrative officers 'as the organisation became flatter and flatter'.

The 'ownership' problem was said to arise from a failure of sequencing within the organisation. At least up to 1992-93, social science knowledge inputs were generally commissioned by PLAN/POL on behalf of the organisation as a whole, in advance of any felt demand to utilise the knowledge in question in the country departments and the functional divisions. However, it is also clear that two other factors were relevant. Firstly, the country departments and the functional divisions often simply lacked capacity to utilise social science knowledge-based inputs because of the professional backgrounds of their programme officers. Secondly, there has probably been a degree of intra-organisational rivalry with resistance - especially from the traditionally strong functional divisions - to what is seen as 'interference' (or at least intensified 'overloading') from POL.

Problems of accumulation and/or retention of social science-based knowledge inputs have mostly also arisen from lack of absorptive capacity outside of POL. The lack of a critical mass at department/division level of programme officers educated or trained in such a way that these inputs can be internalised and retained has naturally led to a high degree of dependence of this process on specific individuals. When these individuals leave the organisation or shift their location within it, the knowledge base is normally too shallow or thinly spread to survive without them.

Problems of quality in work provided by social science-based institutional consultants were surprisingly frequently mentioned by Sida personnel who were interviewed. Much of the time, criticisms concerning quality were often in reality about digestibility, but in some cases they were also about 'over-digestibility'. That is, it was observed by Sida personnel as well as by critical third parties, that 'sometimes we get back only what people expect we want to hear'. In this way, 'familiarity with Sida's needs' may lead either to the production of formula-like types of work, or to the actual filtering out of potentially interesting contributions on the grounds that they may be too critical or 'theoretical'. a second perceived problem is that, some of the time at least,

institutional consultants were being given tasks which they were over-qualified for, i.e., which could have been done in-house within Sida had time been available. Hence Sida was itself contributing to a process of professional 'disqualification'.

The 'focal point'/'resource person' solution: at the beginning of the 1990s, in recognition of some of these problems, some functional divisions began appointing persons with a professional social science background to act as 'focal points' or 'resource persons', whose role often included liaising between themselves and social science-based institutional consultants. The idea was that these persons would be contact point in the divisions with whom the institutional consultants could negotiate, a person who could give internal guidance within the division on how to formulate knowledge needs and use them once they had been produced, and a person who themselves make a professionally-informed active contribution to the division's work. In this way it was expected that the demand for qualified knowledge would increase. The number of such 'focal point' officers actually appointed seems to have been rather small however, not just relatively in relation to the DFID and Netherlands Development Agency model (see below) but even absolutely. This leads once more to a problem of over-dependence on a few individuals. Furthermore it has tended to be the third of their proposed contributions which, in terms of workload, has dominated over the others - thus detracting from their 'focal point' functions. It has therefore been far from general that the demand for qualified external knowledge has increased.

Encouraging local 'ownership' of institutional consultancy arrangements: probably because they have been administratively easier to execute, steps of this kind have been more far reaching and apparently successful than the 'focal point' approach. Taking as a point of departure the recommendations of consultants employed to examine Sida's use of macro-economics inputs from three Swedish university departments of economics, POL has restricted its involvement in the such agreements to that of framing an umbrella arrangement. Country departments or functional divisions are now expected to specify the content of what is to be produced, and to pay for it. This has been associated with a general reduction in the scale of institutional consultancy agreements, although of course this may well be consistent with more effective use of the knowledge which they generate.

8.3 Sida's general ability to engage in organisational learning

Sida today describes itself as a 'learning organisation'. However, the extent to which it has succeeded in institutionalising learning processes appears to remain rather limited.

As early as 1986 the Swedish National Audit Bureau (Riksrevisionsverket) conducted an analysis of Sida as a learning organization entitled 'Does Sida learn?'. At the time, the intentions of this analysis were novel. Systematic analyses of organizations' abilities to learn were not generally accepted and applied until the 1990s and it is only in the 1990s that the concept 'learning

organization' has gained firm ground. Nevertheless, given that the analysis from 1986 was mainly critical of Sida's *inability* to learn, it is of some concern that the report did not seem to result in Sida adopting any systematic policies concerning 'organizational learning'.

Problems with organisational learning continued to be highlighted by various reports and internal surveys throughout the period between 1986 and 1997. For example, recent reports of Sida's use of evaluations and surveys of Sida's use of the Logical Framework Analysis planning methodology have both revealed tendencies for these potentially critical tools for learning and analysis to be used in a formula-like way.

Only in the last two years has a concern with organisational learning been consciously forefronted. A Unit for Organizational Learning (EOL) was established in 1997. The purpose of this unit is to assist in developing learning processes in Sida through a variety of activities including knowledge development, development of educational methods, use of control systems, development of management and staff, and organizational development. EOL has six professional staff, who act in a consultancy role to the organisation generally.

On the basis of identifying this list of relevant activities, EOL has developed a number of initiatives. However, these initiatives have yet to be rooted in the organization. Although managers' knowledge about EOL and the 'learning organization' concept is evident, ordinary programme officer knowledge about the EOL initiatives is thin, and as yet nothing has been done to make them aware of its work. Furthermore, it is unclear whether setting up another small unit on the periphery of the organisation is a meaningful solution to the problems which Sida confronts.

These problems probably relate mainly to Sida's organisational structure. In practice this functions in a highly decentralised way, with powerful subsections exercising a high degree of freedom in how they interpret the organisation's overall objectives and working methods. While successive reorganisations of Sida (including the really major one of 1995) have shifted the pieces of this puzzle, they do not seem to have decreased the autonomy of divisions, country desks, programmes or projects. In this context there is a tendency for the only really common activities within the organisation to become bureaucratic ones, and for centrally-generated strategic decisions to be followed administratively rather than be internalised in the intended way.

Hence, even after the adoption of an official 'learning organisation' profile, it comes as little surprise that most managers do not prioritise what can be called 'the creation of learning occasions' for ordinary employees. Recently, all employees at Sida filled in a questionnaire in which they were asked to evaluate their managers' abilities to perform the various management roles, including that of 'creating learning occasions'. The managers' abilities were rated on a scale from 1 to 6. Employees assessments of their managers' abilities to 'create learning occasions' fell mainly in the middle and lower parts of the scale. Sida managers appear to have highly varied perceptions of

their role in organizational learning processes. Some of them are very conscious of this role and support organizational learning, others are unaware of this role or incapable of transforming it into purposive behaviour that supports learning among employees. As stated earlier, there is as yet no clear strategy for remedying this unevenness through promoting either greater use of learning opportunities or a redesigning organisational routines so that they can be used as learning methods.

9. Alternatives to the Sida model for sourcing social science inputs: some international comparisons

9.1 Introduction

Interviews were conducted with officers of Danida, Norad, DFID (Britain) and NDA (the Netherlands), in order to ascertain current practice concerning sourcing of social science-based inputs amongst organisations with roles, functions and goals comparable to Sida's. Those interviewed were asked about the status of 'social development' activities/functions vis-a-vis other activities/functions which the organisations carried out, about the size of bilateral agencies' in-house resource bases on 'social development', about the nature of the development-related social science research environment in their countries, and about their agency's practices sourcing of different kinds of social science inputs.

While ideally it would have been valuable to further investigate not merely the general situations in Sida's sister agencies in respect of these questions, but also their success in generating relevant social science inputs, it was felt that the latter issue both begged additional major questions and fell outside the scope of this review.

9.2 Status of 'social development' as a functional activity and size of in-house resource base

While all the organisations with whom discussions were held had adopted or confirmed poverty reduction/eradication as their central objective in recent years, and were correspondingly placing far greater weight on questions of 'social development' than hitherto, this was reflected in a considerable diversity of organisational arrangements. These clearly expressed - at least in part - different 'solutions' adopted historically to the general question of steering and coordinating agency interventions and also different real political weights attached to poverty issues. However, they probably also expressed a number of other factors including the relative degrees of power enjoyed in different

‘foreign ministry complexes’ by respectively diplomatic staff and aid professionals, as well as the pre-existing balance of power between different aid professional specialisms.

All the aid agencies concerned had clear divisions between head office and out-stationed activity (based either in separate development cooperation offices or integrally in embassies), and within head offices themselves between technical or functional departments/divisions/directorates and regional and/or country ones. Like Sida, NDA and DFID both have large numbers of out-stationed staff relative to their head office size, and also have relatively large shares of their head office staff in technical/functional divisions. Norad, and to a greater extent Danida, seem to have smaller shares of out-stationed staff and also smaller proportions of head office staff in technical/functional divisions (Danida has only 35 functionally specialist staff in all).

NDA and DFID both have specialised technical/functional divisions dealing with Social Development/Social Affairs, with their own budgets and with substantial degrees of organisational autonomy. Norad has a technical/functional division covering ‘Institutional and Human Development’ within which ‘social development’ is included. Danida’s small general technical/functional division has no sub-division dealing primarily with these issues. Numbers of staff designated as ‘social development’ specialists ranged from 60+ both in NDA and DFID to only one or two in Danida. Mostly, but not exclusively, these staff all have a professional background in social science. Social scientists are also found in other roles within the agencies concerned (in Danida mainly in other roles).

On the basis of this brief sketch, it can perhaps be argued that the different agencies described can be placed on a continuum of greater and lesser degrees of being ‘technically-driven’. NDA and DFID are fairly clearly more ‘technically-driven’ than Norad or especially Danida. (Sida can also be characterised as a technically-driven organisation, although ‘social development’ is not one of the functions currently technically driving it.) The extent to which agencies are technically-driven appears to be directly related to the extent to which large numbers of ‘social development’ specialists can be found in them.

9.3 National social science resource bases

The British resource base is possibly as large as those of the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark combined. It comprises five large university-based generalist schools or institutes of development studies/development management (Sussex, East Anglia, Bath, Swansea, Manchester), one or two smaller ones (e.g. LSE, SOAS), and a similar number of institutions or university departments specialising in relevant disciplines and with concentrations of staff working on developing countries (e.g. the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), London), the Centre for the Study of African Economies (University of Oxford), and Departments of Agricultural Economics at Wye College (University of London) and Reading University). IDS Sussex and ODI traditionally received core funding from the old Ministry of

Overseas Development, but this has been discontinued in recent years. This discontinuation primarily reflects the entrenchment in British public life since 1980 of a broader, ideologically-driven agenda concerning privatisation and ‘free competition’; it does not indicate any dissatisfaction with IDS or ODI as such. Despite these changes and the increasing numbers of other providers, ISD Sussex remains at the core of the British resource base.

At the centre of the Dutch resource base is the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) at the Hague, a very large generalist development studies institution conducting both research and teaching. This is one of 10 sector-focused research institutions directly funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are also a number of university departments specialising in relevant disciplines or themes and with concentrations of staff working on developing countries (e.g. on poverty in developing countries at the University of Utrecht, on society and politics in Indonesia and South East Asia at the University of Amsterdam, on farming systems at the Royal Tropical Institute, etc).

Similar institutions to ISS, i.e., generalist development studies research institutes with a strong core funding element of funding from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, exist in Norway (Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI), Bergen) and Denmark (CDR, Copenhagen). In Norway in addition there are a number of sector research institutions with staff specialising on developing countries (e.g. the Norwegian Foreign Affairs Research Institute (NUPI) and the Norwegian Institute of Local Government Research), and university departments either of a generalist development studies character (e.g. Bergen, Trondheim) or concentrating on particular aspects of development studies (SUM, University of Oslo). In Denmark outside of CDR there is a generalist Development Studies Department at Roskilde University and a number of university departments with small groups of staff working on developing countries and/or development assistance issues (e.g. Development Economics at Copenhagen University, Tropical Agronomy at the Royal Danish Agricultural University (KVL), etc).

The degree of dependence of the three ‘national’ generalist development studies centres (ISS, CMI and CDR) on long-term core funding from their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFA) differs considerably. CDR is roughly 80 per cent and ISS roughly 70 per cent dependent on such funding, while at the other end of the scale CMI is only around 30 per cent dependent. Danish MFA funding of CDR is on a sufficient scale for staff at this institute to carry out a large amount of their own research without going through competitive procedures.

Allowing for population differences and corresponding differences in scale of university sectors there is a remarkable similarity in the nature of the social science resource bases between the countries examined. Even allowing for the much farther advanced ideology of privatisation in Britain, there is less similarity in how they are reproduced.

With regard to the social science resource base outside of the public sector, it

is worth noting that a relative peculiarity of the situations in Norway and Denmark is the presence of some relatively large private consultancy companies with in-house social science expertise. Two Danish companies, Cowi and Carl Bro, are amongst the largest consultancy organisations in the world. Strictly private development consultancy companies in the Netherlands are much smaller and mainly comprise partnerships between former employees of NDA (some of them have former social development officers amongst their staff). As far as social science-based inputs are concerned, British private consultants are normally working individually.

9.4 Accessing the national social science resource base

Two issues can be distinguished here: the types of inputs accessed by bilateral aid agencies from social science providers; and the modalities by which they are accessed.

Types of inputs accessed: Officers of the bilateral aid agencies interviewed were each asked from whom the following kinds of inputs would be typically accessed:

- short (1-2 day) assignments concerning, for example, making of comments on ongoing proposals, on documents from multilateral agencies, and so on;
- medium length (ca. 1-6 month) assignments concerning, for example, some aspect of country monitoring or drafting a substantial policy statement;
- longer-term assignments of 6 months or longer, dealing with a major thematic issue or evaluating a major multilateral programme.

In all cases examined, a clear majority of *short assignments* with respect to 'social development' issues were handled in-house, even where there were few social development specialists. For all the agencies except Norad, where such assignments were handled outside of the house this was done by individual or smaller-scale private consultants. Like Sida, Norad had a system where some such assignments were handled under IC-type agreements. However, Norad's largest social science IC (CMI) generally declined to do such work.

Medium- and long-term length assignments were in all cases exclusively handled externally, though in rather different ways. Within the Dutch system, a high proportion of *medium-term length assignments* would be handled by public sector academic/research institutions, or rather by consultancy companies formed by the latter. In Denmark, a majority would be handled by private consultancy companies, and in Norway and Britain by a mixture (with, in the case of Britain, who does an assignment largely depending on its size).

Except for in Denmark, *long-term assignments* would be mostly handled by public sector academic or research institutions. In most cases, most would devolve to the official or unofficial 'national' development studies centre. In Denmark, and to a lesser extent in Norway, a large proportion of these

assignments were handled by large private sector consultants.

Modalities for accessing the social science resource base: a clear division exists between modalities employed in Denmark and Britain, where all assignments not performed in-house are tendered, and the Netherlands and Norway, where there are longer-term IC-type agreements under which some assignments pass more or less automatically to particular suppliers. In some cases, these agreements are themselves subject to tender. Even in the Netherlands and Norway, these agreements effectively covered only short- and medium-term assignments and longer-term assignments were normally all subject to tendering. The degree to which such tendering is anywhere genuinely competitive is subject to considerable doubt, however. a combination of strong personal networks, informal cartel arrangements and great inequality between bidders (such as between IDS Sussex and other British bidders, due to the former's privileged legacy of state support) mean that tendering processes are often a time-consuming formality.

Thus, in each of the countries examined, mainstream social science-based inputs tend to be predominantly sourced from a single generalist development studies provider. Ongoing formal or informal 'institutional consultancy' (IC) agreements with university anthropology departments, as opposed to such providers, do not seem to exist, although some such agreements appear to exist in relation to economics. University anthropology departments may from time to time be invited to bid for or simply asked to take responsibility for particular studies, but a much more common arrangement is for generalist development studies providers (or in the Danish and Norwegian cases, private consultancy companies) to be requested to include anthropologists in multi-disciplinary teams.

All the core generalist development studies providers in the countries concerned are sources of recruitment for national aid agencies, but the extent to which this is the case is highly variable. Whereas a very high proportion of recent Social Development Adviser recruits at DFID come from IDS Sussex, persons with research training at ISS and CDR perhaps more frequently enter the NGO than the government sector. Technical staff in the Netherlands and Denmark are recruited mainly from the university sector. This pattern may be connected with issues of language.

9.5 Conclusions

A number of generalisations can be drawn from the above discussion.

- more extensive use of *de facto* or *de jure* ICs by bilateral agencies seems to follow from being technically 'driven' to a greater extent, and from having some concentration of professional specialists in-house. Since Sida falls in the former (if not so clearly in the latter) category it is consistent with international practice in its preference for such agreements;

- the Swedish resource base context - where a generalist development studies centre financed to one degree or another by a Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Overseas Development is absent - stands out as unique;
- Sida's use of ICs for short-term assignments is not consistent with international practice generally;
- Sida's use of ICs for medium- and longer-term assignments corresponds to international norms, although it needs to be recognised that elsewhere (e.g. Britain) IC status may be *de facto* rather than *de jure*.

10. Conclusions, recommendations and options

Below we draw more concrete and detailed conclusions and recommendations concerning the various issues covered in this review.

10.1 Sida's need/demand for 'development studies' and for anthropological/sociological knowledge

Whereas Sida has been rather clear in stating its changing policies, it has been less clear as to what these changes mean with respect to the services required from Institutional Consultants (ICs). Generally, there has been a lack of guidance/information on the implication(s) for the collaboration, and in the case of SAI-DSU a low level of follow up and feed back on the tasks actually performed.

It is clear that Sida's need for social science inputs has changed towards a need for high quality inter-disciplinary inputs broadly categorisable as deriving from 'development studies'. However, as will be returned to below, there is currently only a very weak 'development studies' resource base in Sweden. Furthermore, it is our contention that a strong 'development studies' can only be sustained in and through the support of relevant work in the disciplines which contribute to it (economics, political science and anthropology and/or sociology). Therefore, for the foreseeable future, promoting development studies entails promoting the disciplines which form its base.

It is also clear from our assessment of on-going research activities at the four anthropology departments in Sweden, that Swedish anthropologists have an extensive knowledge relevant to important aspects of Sida's current concerns. Much of this research, however, is not placed in the context of development cooperation, and is therefore not directly applicable to Sida's needs. The primary value of the research is rather in its use for drawing implications for Swedish development cooperation.

Current anthropological work which has relevance for both the agendas of a discipline-bound IC agreement focussing exclusively on anthropology, and of a multi-disciplinary 'development studies' IC agreement can be identified as follows:

- the type of anthropology which shows an interpenetration of micro and macro relations, of local and national relations, of national and international relations, and of inter-ethnic relations in the countries of cooperation;
- the theoretical and methodological vantage points in cross-national and transnational approaches, which by a 'scaling up' local findings are capable of identifying national and global forces in the local contexts.

Rather than having a direct bearing on issues of poverty reduction/eradication and the gender sensitive poverty reduction impact of Swedish development cooperation work, these issues are likely to illuminate in a new way issues of national/local power structures; structures and processes excluding the rural poor, and the relation between rural areas and the state, all issues mentioned to us as specific knowledge needs by Sida staff.

To reach this, however, a different type of anthropology to that represented by the split between SAI and DSU is needed. This artificial and out-dated split between basic and applied research is an issue Swedish anthropologists seem willing to do something about.

A new IC agreement concerning anthropology should include the duty to coordinate the Swedish resource base. Because of Sida's shifting social science needs there is still a need for resource base development. Therefore, the agreement should continue to cover resource base development in Sida as well as nationally.

10.2 Sida's policies concerning Institutional Consultants

Recent discussions of the future role of Sida's IC agreements tend to assume that one of their two main initial objectives (i.e., external resource base development) has been accomplished in all cases and that, with this occurring, a rationale no longer exists for giving a favoured position to a specific higher education institution in the allocation of Sida assignments.

In our view the external resource base development mandate is still relevant in Sweden in the fields of both development studies and anthropology. There is no current centre for post-graduate interdisciplinary training and research in development studies and no adequate current IC for providing the new kinds of anthropological inputs which would be useful to Sida.

An equally important argument for ICs is that they have a specific comparative advantage, namely that they can provide a better quality of consultancy service than private consultants on the basis of a synergy between their consultancy and their academic activities, particularly research. Such considerations presumably underlie the links between all of Sida's sister

organisations examined and specific *de jure* or *de facto* ICs for development studies.

If they are to work, Sida's new IC agreements with respect to the disciplines considered here have to take a different point of departure from those framed earlier. First and foremost, they should be based on a clear recognition of the comparative advantage of higher education institution-based consultants over private consultants, and they should take seriously the consequences of recognising these advantages. Secondly, they should also be conditional on these agreements being 'owned' and managed by departments or institutes as a whole, and not by small units of them which run the danger of separation from mainstream department/institute activity. The latter point will be turned to later.

Basing IC agreements on the objective of optimising the comparative advantage of ICs entails that, in the future, Sida insists that ICs possess certain specific characteristics. It also entails that Sida reorganises its division of labour with ICs and that the internal balance of activities within ICs themselves corresponds to a particular pattern.

The principal specific characteristic which Sida should demand of ICs is that they are *functioning environments for relevant research and other academic activity of international standard*. If the comparative advantage of ICs is the synergy between good consultancy work on the one hand, and good research and other academic activity on the other, then Sida should be obliged to ensure that such activities are taking place before entering into IC agreements. This in turn raises the issue of how the 'relevant research' component of this activity should be funded. This question will be examined in the following section.

The extent to which an IC can *reproduce* itself as a functioning environment for relevant research depends on the balance of activities which follow from its taking on an IC status. Our view, substantially supported by international common practice (see Section 9), is that:

- a majority of the overall profile of work of ICs (i.e. its IC work plus its non-IC work) should be research, teaching and other academic activity;
- in relation to their IC consultancy work, ICs and Sida should negotiate programmes of medium- and long-term assignments, with the selection of these assignments having a clear relation to the academic interests of IC staff members;
- while there is no reason why ICs should not continue to do some short-term assignments, the total volume of these should be limited to no more than 10 per cent of all consultancy work undertaken;
- responsibility for the bulk of short-term assignments should be transferred to Sida itself, on the basis of an increase in its social science-based in-house capacity.

The transfer of responsibility for the bulk of short-term assignments from ICs to Sida would have other important benefits for the functioning of IC

agreements, besides creating a balance of work within ICs allowing a more effective optimisation of their comparative advantage. It would give Sida greater internal capacity to formulate and digest relevant tasks for ICs.

10.3 The relation between Institutional Consultants and research

The maintenance of a comparative advantage by an IC means that the IC has to perform research. In practice this means those performing consultancy duties should also be active researchers, although the two tasks cannot always be expected to be carried out simultaneously. On the other hand, it is not reasonable to expect that Sida funds this research, as opposed to requiring participation in it by all IC staff as a contractual precondition.

There are two options for ensuring financially that ICs can be functioning environments for relevant research.

- The model currently operating in Denmark and the Netherlands:
Specific institutes are created or designated and are then given core funding by their respective ministries of foreign affairs covering research costs;
- Funds for relevant research are set aside by government ministries and by research councils, and then existing academic institutions are invited to apply for them. ICs can then be designated from amongst those institutions successfully obtaining such funds. In relation to this option, Sida and SAREC (and other social science research funding organisations in Sweden) could profitably discuss creating a programme under which competition could occur between potential ICs for five year research awards on topics deemed relevant within development studies and anthropology. Obtaining such an award could be one condition of being granted IC status. This also implies that IC status should be granted only for five year periods (although, like research funding, this could be renewed after an appraisal). a five year framework period should provide an incentive both for Sida and the IC to engage in strategic planning concerning the precise assignments ICs are expected to perform.

10.4 Managing Institutional Consultancy Agreements

The issue of managing IC agreements has two components: their management within Sida and within the IC. In addition, there is the issue of the balance of overall managerial responsibilities between Sida and the IC.

Concerning the last of these questions, it is desirable that Sida takes on a greater share of the management of these agreements than was the case in the agreement between Sida and SAI-DSU. In particular, assignments which generate a need for intensive coordination of activities within Sida, such as DSU-organised gender equality training programmes, should be managed by Sida and not by the IC.

With regard to the management of IC agreements within Sida, the importance of ensuring their ownership by technical divisions should be stressed. While it may be desirable to give some central function in Sida the task of drawing up a common set of rules governing agreements, coordinating them so as to prevent duplication, and taking responsibility for the broad framework of each agreement, it is at the same time necessary to underline that these agreements need to be functionally ‘owned’ by Sida’s technical divisions if they are to be fruitful. Where it is in existence, the current system of devolved procurement and management within Sida should be retained. In every case however, these agreements should be as explicit as possible concerning what tasks the IC is expected to perform, and cover a five-year period.

Within the IC, it is of paramount importance that agreements be managed in ways which underline and ensure their ‘ownership’ by an entire academic department or institution. This implies that department/institute heads are involved in the day-to-day administration and not merely in the processing of articles of agreement, and that a majority of staff within an IC-contracted department/institute take an interest in consultancies within the IC framework.

10.5 Sida’s internalisation of anthropological/sociological knowledge generated by ICs

Along with a system allowing for the fullest possible local ownership of IC agreements within Sida, a strengthening of the ‘focal point’/resource person approach is necessary in order for knowledge from ICs to be fully internalised. There should be a number of professionally-qualified social scientists in each Division with which an IC agreement has been made, in order to improve the capacity of the Division to formulate a meaningful five-year framework of tasks, to absorb the knowledge ICs generate, and to carry out in-house some of the shorter assignment work currently performed by ICs. On the other hand, a thorough organisation-wide internalisation of anthropological and sociological knowledge almost certainly depends on the creation of a Social Development Division in Sida (as in a number of its sister agencies), on a par with other Divisions and linked to ICs providing generalised and inter-disciplinary development studies inputs.

10.6 SAI-DSU as a provider of anthropological knowledge

In its recent work for Sida, SAI-DSU has failed to adopt an appropriate strategic perspective aimed at optimising its comparative advantage as an IC in the area of anthropology. The high volume of short-term assignments which DSU undertook, the nature of some of these assignments, and the fact that research and other mainstream disciplinary activities have not had a core status at DSU, meant that there was little synergy between current developments in anthropology and the work which DSU supplied to Sida.

Sida itself shares responsibility for this state of affairs by constantly requesting DSU to perform functions which could have been performed in-house or by

professional consultants, and by using DSU as an ‘on-call’ stop-gap rather than in a strategic manner. Within Sida there are frequent expressions of needs not merely for short-term consultancies but also for anthropology-based contributions which will better help them understand important underlying processes in its partner countries. But there is little recognition that such good quality knowledge of this kind implies a theoretical and methodological anchorage in the discipline and an awareness of innovations in the discipline and/or in interdisciplinary drives towards new approaches. Such an anchorage, and such awareness are unlikely to be promoted locally when the supplier is encouraged to specialise in types of activity without a clear relation to the disciplinary core. Following from this, it is recommended that future IC agreements should build on anthropological key competences and resist efforts to oblige the consultants to undertake work which erodes disciplinary competences.

10.7 Future relations between Sida and DSU

It is clear that under the conditions set out above (section 9.2), DSU would not qualify for IC status in its present form or with its present staff. Its *de facto* separation from SAI, and the current relatively low level of involvement in research by its core staff, would have to be overcome for DSU to be considered. Given that the SAI-DSU division appears irresolvable, this scenario is unlikely and probably does not merit much investment of effort. The Sida agreement with DSU should therefore be terminated.

On the other hand, DSU staff have shown themselves to be extremely able in performing a variety of functions which could be combined with others into more long-term assignments: They have enormous experience of dealing with Sida, they have not been disqualified as development studies (as opposed to anthropology) practitioners, and they have an intimate knowledge of the broad development studies resource base. Any new development studies IC would benefit from their experience, as would any small unit within Sida specialising in the coordination of IC agreements.

10.8 Options for future sourcing of anthropological and ‘development studies’ knowledge: some general considerations

Before indicating a number of long- and short-term options for Sida’s sourcing of anthropological and ‘development studies’ knowledge, all of which assume the pre-conditions spelt out above, a few words may be said on relevant criteria for discriminating between these options. The first two of these criteria are derived, directly or indirectly, from the original reasons advanced in the 1980s for establishing IC agreements and their further elaboration in this review. The others are based on other practical and quality concerns. They are:

- that the option provides Sida with access to discipline-based knowledge;
- that the option contributes to the development of the Swedish resource base;

- that the option can be implemented rapidly;
- that the option provides Sida with access to a supplier of international quality.

Cost is not used here as a criteria, for reasons explained in our tender document.

10.9 Long-term options

10.9.1 Agreements for both anthropology and development studies with Swedish ICs

Some reasons for preferring IC agreements with both anthropology and development studies ICs in Sweden have already been provided. An anthropology agreement with a Swedish department/institute would give access to discipline-based knowledge, and stimulate the development of the Swedish resource base. It could also be implemented reasonably rapidly. Concentrations of interesting resources with regard to a new anthropology agreement appear to be present in Gothenburg and Uppsala.

A development studies agreement would give a less direct relation to the discipline-base and also be slower to implement, because of the dispersed and/or embryonic nature of the current Swedish resource base. Resources to contribute to a Swedish centre for development studies appear to be in existence in SLU (although heavily biased towards rural development), and in an embryonic multi-disciplinary environment involving anthropologists, PADRIGU, development economics, and others in Gothenburg. However, such an agreement would develop the Swedish resource base.

In both cases, issues of accesses international quality inputs are deprioritised over national concerns, although this is not to say that there are no Swedish resources of international quality.

10.9.2 Agreement for development studies only with a new Swedish IC

The pros and cons of the case for a development studies IC agreement are listed in the previous sub-section.

10.9.3 Agreement for development studies only with an existing Norwegian or Danish IC

Existing ICs for development studies are present in Norway (CMI, Bergen) and Denmark (CDR, Copenhagen). Both have substantial numbers of researchers from a number of disciplines and have enjoyed *de facto* IC status with Norad and Danida respectively for many years. Entering an agreement with them, and/or in the medium term negotiating their transition to broader Scandinavian institutions, would be more rapidly implementable course of action than starting a Swedish development studies centre from scratch. Furthermore, choosing between CMI and CDR would enable some criteria of quality to be introduced. On the other hand, like the option of aiming only for a development studies IC in Sweden, this option de-prioritises issues

of links with the disciplines, as well (in this case) of development of the specifically Swedish resource base.

10.9.4 Agreement for development studies only with a non-Scandinavian IC

International quality development studies ICs (either de facto or de jure) using English as their working language are present in the Netherlands (ISS) and Britain (IDS, Sussex). Sida already has extensive experience of working with IDS. The pros and cons of such agreements are fairly clear: they are quickly implementable and allow the prioritisation of issues of international quality, but seriously deprioritise that of access to the Swedish resource base. The same reservations concentrating these institutions to the discipline base apply as for other agreements solely for development studies provision.

10.10 A short-term option

One short-term option will be described here. Of course, this may be combined with one or another of the longer-term options. The short-term option has three elements:

- Sida undertakes an accelerated expansion of its in-house capacity in respect of anthropology and/or development studies via a programme of secondments, both from academic institutions, ICs outside Sweden and/or from other bilaterals;
- Sida formulates a series of short (1-2 year) agreements with existing centres in Sweden already in possession of research funding for relevant anthropology/development studies. This would probably have to entail relaxing the criteria of relevance mentioned earlier;
- Sida asks one of these centres to (re)constitute a coordinating committee charged with resource base development, but which could perhaps over time acquire a wider remit.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

1. Sida

NATUR

Daniel Asplund
Inga Bergvall
Kristina Bohman
Johan Brisman
Johan Holmberg
Christer Holtsberg
Karin Isaksson
Erik Skoglund

POL

Carolyn Hannan Anderson
Dag Ehrenpreis
Katja Jassey
Ingrid Löfström-Berg

INEC - IKTS

Johnny Andersson

EVU

Berit Rylander

UTV

Eva Lövgren
Stefan Molund

AFRA

Birgitta Sevefjord

RELA

Anders Rönquist

DESO

Lena Ekroth
Per Nordlund
Marja Ruohomäki
Margaretha Tullberg

PEO

Lennart Andersson
Gunilla Ankers
Gisela Wasmouth

SAREC

Berit Olsson

2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Gunilla Olsson

3. Development Studies Unit

Paul Dover
Eva Tobisson
Prudence Woodford-Berger

4. Anthropology Departments

Stockholm

Bengt Erik Borgström
Gudrun Dahl
Jónína Einarsdottir
Karl Erik Knutsson
Don Kulick
Eva Poluha

Uppsala

Per Brandström
Bernhard Helander
Jan Ovesen

Göteborg

Claes Corlin
Marita Eastmond
Jan Hultin
Wil Lundström

Lund

Melcher Ekströmmer
Jonathan Friedman

5. Other Swedish Institutions

Lennart Wohlgemuth (NAI)
Bawa Yamba (NAI)
Niels Ivar Isaksson (SLU)

6. Consultants

Lasse Krantz

7. Partners in Developing Countries

C.S.L. Chachage (Department of Sociology & Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam)

8. Other Aid Agencies

Anders Baltzer Jørgensen (Danida)

Arjan de Haan (DFID)

T. Kruit (Netherlands Development Agency)

Per Prestgård (NORAD)

9. Development Studies Institutes outside Sweden

Arne Tostensen (CMI, Bergen)

Marc Whyts (ISS, The Hague)

ANNEX 2: LIST OF RECEIVED WRITTEN COMMENTS TO DRAFT REPORT

Paul Dover (DSU)
Eva Tobisson (DSU)
Prudence Woodford-Berger (DSU)
Lasse Krantz (Göteborg)
Gudrun Dahl (SAI)
Jonathan Friedman (Soc. Ant. Lund)

ANNEX 3: PARTICIPANTS IN MINI WORKSHOP, STOCKHOLM, JANUARY 18, 1999

Per Brandström (CAI, Uppsala)
Jan Ovesen (CAI, Uppsala)
Peter Gibbon (CDR, Copenhagen)
Ninna Nyberg Sørensen (CDR, Copenhagen)
Prudence Woodford Berger (DSU, Stockholm)
Eva Tobisson (DSU, Stockholm)
Lasse Krantz (Gothenburg)
Anders Rönquist (RELA)
Bengt-Erik Borgström (SAI, Stockholm)
Gudrun Dahl (SAI, Stockholm)
Ulf Hannerz (SAI, Stockholm)
Thomas Kjellqvist (SAREC)
Jonathan Friedman (SI, Lund)
Ann Stödberg (Sida, EVU)
Margareta Tullberg (Sida, DESO/HÄLSO)
Kristina Bohman (Sida, NATUR)
Anders Höök (Sida, NATUR)
Karin Isaksson (Sida, NATUR)
Ola Möller (Sida, NATUR)
Katja Jassey (Sida, POLICY)
Birgitta Sevefjord (Sida, POLICY)
Susanna Wadstein (Sida, POLICY)
Cecilia Angberg (Praktikant, Sida)
Gunilla Olsson (UD/IC, Policy)

Diarienummer:
NATUR-1998-05109

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE
COLLABORATION BETWEEN SIDA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY, DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIT,
STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY

1 BACKGROUND

In 1976, the former SIDA's Department of Agriculture, renamed the Department for Natural Resources and the Environment (NATUR) within the new Sida, initiated a collaboration with the Department of Social Anthropology/ The Development Studies Unit (SAI-DSU), at Stockholm University, based on a formal agreement. The agreement was renegotiated and renewed in 1995.

The **overall objectives** of the collaboration are the subsequent:

- To make social anthropological expertise available to Sida in a suitable and easily accessible manner, in order to enhance the socio-cultural quality of Swedish development cooperation.
- To promote capacity building in the area of applied (development) anthropology at Stockholm University, as well as other Swedish universities with anthropology departments.
- To support the creation and long-term sustainability of a resource base of development-oriented anthropologists in Sweden and promote the involvement of existing social anthropological expertise in development cooperation work.

The **specific objectives** are defined in yearly activity plans for each department of Sida wishing to draw on the agreement. In the case of NATUR, the **basic assignment** consists of the provision of expertise for minor consultations, documentation and information services, and of the development of the resource base in applied anthropology/sociology. In addition to this, **specific assignments**, of a more in-depth or long-term

nature, may be agreed upon. SAI-DSU is also free to undertake tasks based on regular commercial bidding procedures.

Up to the present, NATUR has served as Sida's focal point with regard to the collaboration and has represented the agency in the signing of the overall agreement. Nevertheless, the agreement may be utilised by any one of Sida's departments as a basis for negotiating a sub-agreement. Several of the departments have used this opportunity, in particular the departments for Policy, Health, Evaluation and Research Collaboration (SAREC).

The extent of the collaboration between NATUR and SAI-DSU increased steadily until 1993/94. Since then, there has been a gradual decrease, due both to Sida budget restrictions and to changes with respect to the types of services required by the agency. The 1998 basic assignment totals 36 weeks, or SEK 915 000. The form and magnitude of the possible future collaboration between Sida and SAI is expected to be influenced to a considerable degree by the outcome of this review.

2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE IN-DEPTH REVIEW

The present overall agreement between Sida and SAI comes to an end in December 1999, and it has appeared useful to both parties to carry out an in-depth review of the collaboration and its results before that date.

As stated above, Sida's specific needs for social science expertise are changing by becoming more and more related to policy issues and methodologies of Swedish development cooperation on all levels, rather than to project activities and other aspects of field work, as was largely the case earlier. In addition, Sida has changed the nature of its relations and collaboration with institutional consultants generally. From Sida's point of view there is, consequently, reason to assess SAI's suitability as a partner under the new circumstances, and to consider other possible collaborative alternatives. Such alternatives could involve SAI-DSU in a different role/relationship, or it could mean the adoption of new solutions, involving another set of actors and combinations of social science resources.

From the point of view of SAI-DSU, there is, likewise, a need to have the new situation analysed in terms of opportunities and constraints, in order to be able to judge whether it meets the specific needs and interests corresponding to the main research orientation and teaching activities of the department/unit.

The **main aims** of the review are:

- To present an overview and analysis of the extent, approaches, content and forms of the collaboration to date, based on the experience of both

parties, considering, especially, the relevance of the different aspects of the collaboration in relation to the objectives and goals of Swedish development cooperation.

- To pay special attention to

- * The relevance, results and effectiveness of the collaboration in relation to projects and programmes, policy development and capacity building within different departments of Sida;

- * The development of applied anthropology at Stockholm university and elsewhere in Sweden;

- * The establishment of a long-term resource base.

- To present recommendations for the future concerning how Sida can best gain access to qualified social-science expertise. The recommendations shall include possible reorientation/adjustments of the present form of collaboration as well as a discussion of alternative solutions.

Poverty and gender perspectives should be integral parts of the review.

Primary stakeholders are NATUR, as well as other Sida departments drawing on the present agreement, and SAI-DSU. Other important stakeholders are the anthropological departments/divisions of Swedish universities outside Stockholm.

The review is being commissioned by Sida. Issues concerning the elaboration of the Terms of Reference have been discussed with SAI-DSU. SAI-DSU will have the opportunity of commenting on the draft report.

3 THE ASSIGNMENT (ISSUES TO BE COVERED IN THE IN-DEPTH REVIEW)

The review should combine a broad, historical perspective with a more concrete and detailed one concerning the various parts of the present form of collaboration and the possible re-orientation of some or all of these. The overall effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration should be discussed, as well as the most important factors related to institutional and financial sustainability. It is expected that recommendations include a discussion of different models for collaborative arrangements. Considerations should build on "lessons learned" as well as on an analysis of opportunities, constraints, strengths and weaknesses of present and new alternatives. The main focus should be on the period after 1985.

3.1 Historical background, 1976-1985

The consultant shall summarise the main characteristics of the historical background of the collaboration between Sida and SAI-DSU. Attention

should be paid to the objectives and expectations of both parties and what they, today, consider to be the most important lessons from this period. The discussion should encompass main approaches including choice of sectors and geographical areas, manners of formalisation, fees and volume of staffing and financing, as well as quality and quantity of output. The main changes in the collaboration and the reasons for these should receive attention, including the weight given to poverty and gender dimensions by both sides.

3.2 Particular issues to be covered in relation to more recent phases of the collaboration

With regard to the period after 1985, the consultant shall present a more detailed account and analysis. The following should be included:

- i) Assessment of the relevance and results of the collaboration with regard to the goals and objectives of Swedish development cooperation as expressed in Sida's guiding documents, such as policies and methodological guides. Special attention should be given to the relevance of the present forms of collaboration in relation to the four recently adopted Action programmes concerning Poverty Eradication, Gender Equality, the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Democracy/Human Rights.
- ii) Presentation and discussion of forms and outcomes of the collaboration in relation to field activities, e.g. project planning and implementation, with information gathered primarily through interviews with both parties.
- iii) Discussion of the relevance, results and effectiveness of the collaboration with regard to Sida's need to have access to social science expertise for capacity building and training, as expressed by the various Sida departments involved in the collaboration. Attention should be paid to the following problem areas
 - * Sida's capacity for clearly stating priorities and needs in the dialogue with SAI-DSU and for delineating roles;
 - * Quality and efficiency of SAI-DSU assistance and contributions in relation to the needs and objectives expressed by Sida;
 - * Sida's capacity for absorption and operationalization with regard to the services offered by SAI-DSU.
- iv) The effects of the collaboration with regard to the practical and strategic goals and needs of SAI-DSU and the consequences of this for the unit. The analysis should also include a discussion of aspects of the relationship between the unit and the department which have had a bearing on the collaboration. The characteristics and influence of the administrative and economic links to Stockholm University should likewise be considered in relation to the collaboration.

v) The consequences of the collaboration between Sida and SAI-DSU with regard to other departments/divisions of anthropology at Swedish universities outside Stockholm, including

- * The role and functions of the inter-departmental advisory body, "Biståndskommittén";

- * Results concerning capacity building in the field of applied anthropology in these departments and opportunities for anthropologists there to carry out assignments related to development cooperation.

vi) Results with regard to the efforts to establish a high-quality, long-term resource base of development anthropologists, with special emphasis on the role played by the Minor Field Studies and Junior Expert Programmes.

3.3 Cost efficiency and sustainability

The cost efficiency of the various parts of the collaboration, as well as the overall undertaking, should be discussed. The views of both parties should be represented.

- * From the point of view of Sida, fees and charges should be analysed in relation to alternative ways of obtaining similar services of equal quality.

- * From the point of view of SAI-DSU the discussion should take the needs of institutional and financial sustainability into account. The financial relationship between the unit, the department and the university as a whole should be included in the analysis.

- * An attempt should be made to estimate the sustainability of the knowledge/information content of the collaboration by considering e.g. evidence of the existence and quality of institutional memories.

3.4 Discussion of alternatives

The consultant will be expected to present a discussion on alternative solutions concerning Sida's need for acquiring social science expertise. This should be based both on the findings of the review and on existing international evidence. The members of the team are invited to present their own experiences and views on collaborative arrangements deemed to be of relevance.

3.5 Recommendations

As outlined above, the consultant shall present recommendations on how Sida may best access high quality social science expertise suitable for the present needs of the agency, in particular the need for strengthening the gender-sensitive poverty reduction impact of Swedish development cooperation work. The recommendations are expected to be based on careful considerations of both possible changes within present structures and new alternatives. In analysing the capacity for effectuating change within existing structures, the perceptions and priorities of both parties

should be taken into account. The recommendations should include considerations of the pros and cons with regard to working with academic institutions as compared to commercial consultancy firms.

4 METHODOLOGY, TEAM COMPOSITION AND TIME SCHEDULE

The methods employed by the consultant are expected to combine the analysis of documents with formal as well as informal interviews and discussions. Documents of interest for this review include policies, action programmes, project documents of various kinds, development studies, annual and quarterly reports, and correspondence between the parties. The consultant will receive support from Sida staff as well as SAI-DSU. The review shall include interviews with representatives of the departments/divisions of anthropology in Uppsala, Göteborg and Lund.

The team should comprise at least 2 persons and must incorporate highly qualified expertise in the areas of

- * Anthropological theory, research and practice (PhD-level);
- * Anthropology as applied to development assistance, including solid experience of collaboration between development organisations and university/research organisations;
- * The approaches, goals, methods, organisation and structure of Swedish development cooperation, particularly with regard to the types of activities and services in which SAI-DSU is engaged;
- * Institutional/organisational development, including a solid university background and/or experience from a research organisation;
- * Extensive experience in the areas of international development and development cooperation.

Since the main body of documentation is in Swedish, the team members must be able to read Swedish.

The in-depth review shall be carried out within the period 1 November 1998 - 1 February 1999. It is expected that a maximum work time of 13 weeks will be needed for the whole team, including preparation, implementation and report writing.

The review should preferably start in the month of November, 1998.

5 REPORTING

The report shall be written in English and should not exceed 25 pages, excluding annexes. Format and outline shall, in general, follow the guidelines in **Sida Evaluation Report - a Standardised Format** (see Annex 1). 3 copies of the draft report shall be submitted to Sida no later than 1 February, 1999. Within 2 weeks after receiving Sida's comments on the draft report, a final version in 3 copies, and on diskette, shall be

submitted to Sida. Subject to decision by Sida, the report may be published and distributed as a Sida publication. The report shall be written in Word 6.0 for Windows (or in a compatible format) and should be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.

The assignment includes the production of a Newsletter summary following the guidelines in **Sida Evaluations Newsletter – Guidelines for Evaluation Managers and Consultants** (Annex 2) and also the completion of **Sida Evaluations Data Work Sheet** (Annex 3). The separate summary and a completed Data Work Sheet shall be submitted to Sida along with the (final) draft report.

Recent Sida Evaluations

- 98/34 Support to Building an Institutional Capacity for Arbitration in Sri Lanka. Claes Lindahl, Gustaf Möller, Sundeep Waslekar
Department for Infrastructure and Economic Cooperation
- 98/35 Three Human Rights Organisations Based in Banjul, Africa. The African Commission on Human and peoples' Rights, The African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, The African Society of International and Comparative Law. Lennart Wohlgemuth, Jonas Ewald, Bill Yates
Department for Democracy and Social development
- 98/36 The Training of Journalists in Central and Eastern Europe. Tiina Meri, Börje Wallberg
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
- 98/37 Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. Iain Cameron, Kristina Flodman, Anna-Karin Lindblom, Eva Åhlström
Department for Democracy and Social development
- 98/38 Swedish Support to University of Eduardo Mondlane in Mozambique. David Wield, Admir Bay, Silas Gustafsson, Penina Mlama
Department for Research Cooperation SAREC
- 99/1 Renewable Energy Technologies in Asia: A Regional Research and dissemination Programme. Smail Khennas and Teresa Andersson
Department for Research Cooperation, SAREC
- 99/2 Strengthening Publishing in Africa An evaluation of APNET. Lars P Christensen, Cecilia Magnusson Ljungman, John Robert Ikoja Odongo, Maira Sow, Bodil Folke Frederiksen.
Department for Democracy and Social Development
- 99/3 Paper, Prices and Politics. An evaluation of the Swedish support to the Bai Bang project in Vietnam. David Vincent, Nguyen Quoc, Ngo Minh Hang, Allan Jamieson, Nicholas Blower, Mandy Thomas, Pham Quang Hoan, Do Thi Binh, Adam McCarty, Hoang Van Hoa, David Pearce, Derek Quirke, Bob Warner.
Department for Evaluation and Internal Audit
- 99/4 A leap of Faith. A story of Swedish aid and paper production in Vietnam - the Bai Bang project, 1969-1996. Alf Morten Jerve, Irene Nörlund, Astri Suhrke, Nguyen Thanh Ha
Department for Evaluation and Internal Audit
- 99/5 Sida-Supported Programme within the African Energy Policy Research Network, AFREPREN. Frede Hvelplund, Ernst Worrell
Department for Research Cooperation, SAREC
- 99/6 Masters Programme in Land Management. Swedish support channelled through The Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) to participants in Central and Eastern Europe. Jim Widmark
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
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